

The Father and the Son: Matthew's Theological Grammar

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Theology
in the Divinity School of Duke University

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

To say that the first Gospel is about Jesus is to state what any reader knows from the most cursory glance at Matthew's narrative. Yet the scholarly discourse about Jesus' identity in Matthew reveals a fundamental confusion about how to articulate the identity of Jesus vis-à-vis "God" in the narrative. Not infrequently, for example, scholars assert that Matthew portrays Jesus as the "expression" or "embodiment" of Israel's God, but those same scholars – often leaving opaque the theological content of such descriptors – assert that Jesus is not therefore to be "identified" or "equated" with God; Jesus is "less than God," God's agent "through" whom God works. The result is a significant lack of perspicuity regarding the proper articulation of Jesus' identity in Matthew's Gospel.

The present work attempts to bring greater clarity to the articulation of Jesus' identity in Matthew by attending more precisely to two unique linguistic patterns woven deeply into the entire narrative's presentation of Jesus, namely, Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and his paternal-filial idiom. We turn first to Matthew's extensive use of the word προσκυνέω. Such language constitutes an important part of Israel's liturgical-linguistic repertoire – used often, for example, for the "worship" of Israel's God in Deuteronomy and the Psalms – and Matthew clearly shares that theological grammar (e.g., 4:9-10; cf. 22:37). At the same time, προσκυνέω serves as a Christological *Leitwort* in Matthew's narrative. While the word's meaning of course depends on its context – it need not mean "worship" in every instance – Matthew uses it ten times for Jesus and in all portions of the narrative; it constitutes the most basic (proper) response to Jesus.

Matthew's reservation of the word προσκυνέω for these two figures – Israel's Lord God and Jesus – and his pervasive use of it for the latter suggests it may help render more intelligible the expression of Jesus' identity vis-à-vis "God" in the first Gospel.

We begin our study of προσκυνέω, therefore, by surveying its history of usage in Matthew's cultural encyclopedia, which helps sensitize us to the linguistic "training," so to speak, in which Matthew participates. Since the narrative, however, is the actual discourse in which the meaning of words is determined, I then go on to consider the particular contours of Matthew's appropriation of προσκυνέω language in the whole narrative. Not only does Matthew use προσκυνέω frequently for Jesus – unlike Mark and Luke – but more importantly, he employs it repeatedly in Christologically provocative and literarily strategic ways. At the climactic moment of the magi's visit, for example, the magi's action is expressed this way: καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πесόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ (2:11). Likewise, at the climactic moment of Jesus' temptation, those same words reappear in Satan's mouth – ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι – only to be rebuffed by Jesus in the words of Israel's most basic confession: κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις (4:9-10). I argue that Matthew has carefully shaped these accounts to reflect one another in a number of significant details, such that the reader is left with an apparent incongruity – Jesus receives from the magi what he declares belongs to Israel's God.

Several literary phenomena further confirm that these initial appearances of προσκύνῃς are not incidental to Matthew's theological grammar. The sharpness of the incongruity between 2:1-12 and 4:8-10 is intensified cumulatively as Matthew repeatedly

deploys προσκυνέω language in a way that re-activates his earlier uses. In his next use of προσκυνέω – after the temptation – the leper falls down in προσκύνῃς before Jesus, whom he addresses as κύριε (8:2-4). Along with other important elements, Matthew has added/adapted these words to/from his Markan source as well as “intratextually” reflected Jesus’ words at his recent temptation – only the κύριος receives προσκύνῃς (see also 9:18; 15:25; 20:20). In such accounts, I argue, the content of the characters’ actions remains ambiguous – προσκύνῃς need not mean “worship” at the story level – but Matthew has nonetheless made a number of moves at the literary and lexical levels that make his προσκυνέω motif reverberate loudly for the reader in a christologically significant manner; the προσκύνῃς offered to Jesus reflects that which Israel offered to its God. Importantly, similar patterns obtain not only in the details and literary settings of various pericopae, but also in the narrative’s broader shape.

For instance, Matthew – uniquely among the synoptists – brings three episodes in a row into close correspondence linguistically and thematically, which come together to underscore the question of true and false “worship” (14:33 [προσκυνέω]; 15:9 [σέβω]; 15:25 [προσκυνέω]). The “worship” of the two “outer” episodes turns explicitly on the question of Jesus’ identity (14:33; 15:25), thereby setting in bold relief the “inner” episode that highlights Israel’s “vain worship” (15:9). As another example, the magi’s action in the narrative’s introduction of Jesus is mirrored in its corresponding literary frame – the women grasp the risen Jesus’ feet and offer him προσκύνῃς, as do the eleven disciples (28:9; 17). What Satan requested of Jesus – only to be refused on *theological* grounds (4:8-10) – Jesus receives.

Finally, I consider how Matthew closely connects the προσκύνησις offered to Jesus in the narrative's frame with a decisive episode at the center of the narrative, 14:22-33. There, the disciples render Jesus προσκύνησις as "Son of God" (θεοῦ υἱός) after Peter repeatedly addresses him as the "Lord" in whose "hand" is the power to "save" from the mighty waters. I argue extensively that 14:22-33 – both in its literary form and in its sustained appropriation of OT imagery for YHWH – compels the reader to see Jesus, the filial κύριος, as the recipient of the προσκύνησις Israel reserved for κύριος ὁ θεός. How Matthew can make this *christological* move while affirming Israel's basic commitment to the one God, I argue, turns on the filial language that comes to expression in the disciples' dramatic confession. Matthew, that is, reshapes the articulation of Israel's Lord God around the relation of the filial and paternal κύριος.

It is to that filial and paternal language, therefore, that we turn as the capstone of our discussion of Matthew's theological grammar. I contend that the narrative as a whole reflects the basic logic of 14:22-33; to tell the story of Israel's κύριος ὁ θεός is to tell the eschatologically-climactic story of the filial κύριος who rules and saves. I examine closely several passages – and their literary contexts – that serve seminal roles in Matthew's theological grammar, tracing how each brings Father and Son together in mutually constitutive relationship around their identity as κύριος (e.g., 22:41-46; 3:1-17; 11:1-12:8; 23:8-10; 23:37-24:2). I further trace the pattern of Matthew's filial and paternal language, demonstrating the ubiquitous christological shape to Matthew's paternal idiom; the identity of "God" in Matthew cannot be articulated apart from this particular Father-Son relation. Finally, I conclude the study by considering the close

relation between Matthew's Emmanuel motif and his filial grammar (1:23; 18:19-20; 28:19-20); the Son is the filial repetition of the Father, his immanent presence among the people whom he saves (1:21; 2:6).

For Keely, Salem, Silas, and Evangeline

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Acknowledgments

In *On the Sublime*, Pseudo-Longinus cites Demosthenes' remark that "the greatest of all blessings is to be fortunate, but next to that and equal in importance is to be well advised – for good fortune is utterly ruined by the absence of good counsel." Whether or not he is right about "good fortune," he is surely right about "good counsel." The good counsel I have received from my advisor, C. Kevin Rowe, both in matters scholarly and personal, is inestimable. Mostly by imitation, I have learned from him what it means to be a biblical scholar and, more importantly, what it means to live a Christian life. To borrow his words from another context, his is "the kind of life that forms the background of the possibility of being able to know the truth rather than the lie—a true kind of life." Beyond classroom instruction, personal conversations, and his investment in this dissertation, the shape of his life has profoundly molded my theological imagination.

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INTRODUCTION

“...and like all objects to which a man devotes himself, they had fashioned him into correspondence with themselves.”

- George Eliot, *Silas Marner*

Works of pride, by self-called creators, with their premium on originality, reduce the Creation to novelty – the faint surprises of minds incapable of wonder

*Good works find the way between pride and despair.
It graces with health. It heals with grace.
It preserves the given so that it remains a gift.*

- Wendell Berry, “Healing”

Around the time I was beginning research for this dissertation, I came across the disruptive stanzas above by Wendell Berry. Berry, whose lived intellectual life I very much admire, began to put me in something of a quandry. His words about our treatment of creation seemed analogous to a common way of construing dissertation writing in biblical studies. How could I write a dissertation without saying something “novel”? Is that not the purpose of a dissertation – to say something “original”? Probably I had something of a self-imposed, truncated view of the purpose of a dissertation, but it can hardly be denied that there is a widespread premium on novelty in dissertation writing.

Around the same time I came across a similar claim by Paul Griffiths:

In its ideal type ... the novelty is always just out of reach, beckoning seductively.... Appeals to the desirability of the new and claims that something is new are as likely to mask repetition, recapitulation, and imitation, as they are to signal the presence of something genuinely novel.¹

¹ Paul J. Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 210.

Words like “pride,” “despair,” “desire,” and “gift” feel a bit out of place in an introduction to a dissertation on Matthew, and I do not wish to inundate the reader here in a deluge of self-psychologizing. More importantly for this introduction, however, is that two such witnesses, Berry and Griffiths, were sufficient to make me think hard about the nature of the task ahead of me.

I begin as I do, rather than directly with my topic of study, as an attempt primarily to keep ever before myself, and also the reader, what I hope to accomplish with this study. While the focused effort of this project is to investigate in detail a particular aspect of Matthew’s narrative christology, the larger goal is summed up well by Paul Holmer:

At best, the theological research that goes on does not quite issue in real theology – instead it prepares people a bit, at the most, for appreciating the real thing. It is like logic in respect to thinking and grammar in respect to writing prose . . . the continuous task of theology is both to say and to resay what are the rudiments of the Bible and of the faith; and this is its simplest and never-ending responsibility.²

The hope of this study is to “resay,” or perhaps better, to “extend”³ and render more perspicuous certain aspects of Matthew’s theological grammar, the proper ordering of which cannot help but better situate the Church to “appreciate the real thing,” the one to whom the text bears witness; or, in Elliot’s words above, for the Church to be more closely “fashioned into correspondence” with the one to whom the narrative calls us to render προσκύνησις.⁴ There is more to say regarding the hermeneutical posture of this

² *The Grammar of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper Row Publishers, 1978), 25, 28.

³ Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite*, 20. See also Thomas Pfau, *Minding the Modern: Human Agency, Intellectual Traditions, and Responsible Knowledge* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), chapter 3.

⁴ Cf. John Webster, “Resurrection and Scripture,” in *Christology and Scripture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (LNTS 348; London: T&T Clark, 2007), esp. 153.

study, to which we shall return in the concluding postscript. However, with the mention of προσκύνησις, I turn more immediately to the topic of and justification for this study.

I. The Study and Its Justification

Since the rise of the application of narrative criticism to the literature of the Old and New Testaments, there has been an increasing appreciation for the literary artistry of the Gospel narratives, and for Matthew in particular. Whereas older studies of Matthew could rather blithely suggest that Matthew unwittingly incorporated competing traditions or doublets,⁵ the majority of recent critics agree that the author of the first Gospel has crafted his narrative with rather careful deliberation. Beaton's description represents this broadly shared opinion:

For Matthew, the allusions to the OT within the narrative itself serve as pointers to the significance of a particular event for a thoughtful or informed audience.... This, plus the other literary and stylistic features, implies that the document was crafted with a sophistication and complexity that rewarded repeated performances or readings.⁶

⁵ Cf., e.g., Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit. Untersuchungen zur Theologie des Matthäus* (FRLANT 82; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 16; Douglas R. A. Hare, *The Theme of Jewish Persecution of Christians in the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (SNTSMS 6; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 111-12; Stephenson H. Brooks, *Matthew's Community: The Evidence of His Special Sayings Source* (JSNTSup 16; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 59-64; E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (New York: Penguin, 1993), 94.

⁶ Richard Beaton, "How Matthew Writes," in *The Written Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 134; cf. also Richard Burridge, "From Titles to Stories" in *The Person of Christ* (eds. Stephen R. Holmes and Murray A. Rae; London: T&T Clark, 2005), 48; Mark Allan Powell, "The Plot and Subplots of Matthew's Gospel," *NTS* 38 (1992): 187-204; Dale Allison's essay, "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*" (idem, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005]) helpfully illustrates the careful construction of the narrative as a whole; also in the same volume, see his essay "Foreshadowing the Passion"; Krister Stendahl says that Matthew "works with a clarity of purpose, which should allow us to find out what *he* thinks that he is doing with his material," "Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Mt 1-2," in *Judentum – Urchristentum – Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (ed. Walther Eltester; BZNW 26; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1964), 96 (italics original); cf. also Hubert Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi: Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangeliums nach Matthäus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973), 324; N. T. Wright says that Matthew is "clearly crafted and sculpted" (*The New Testament and the People of God*. Vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992], 386). See also the comments by Roland Mushat Frye, "A Literary Perspective for the Criticism of the Gospels," in *Jesus and Man's Hope* (eds. D. G. Miller and D. Y. Hadidian; 2 vols; Pittsburg: Pittsburg Theological Seminary Press, 1971), 2:220, n. 42. For a

Speaking of the intricacies of the infancy narrative, Pesch similarly attests that “der [Text] ja wahrlich kein volkstümliches Erzeugnis mündlicher Überlieferung, sondern meisterhafte Komposition eines begabten Evangelisten ist.”⁷

It is all the more surprising, then, that Matthew’s προσκυνέω language has received very little sustained attention,⁸ since such language is in fact a significant point of emphasis in Matthew’s narrative portrayal of Jesus. Of course, commentators have long-noted that προσκυνέω is a “favorite” Matthean term – he uses the term thirteen times (ten for Jesus) compared to Mark’s two and Luke’s three. But often the discussion has neglected the literarily strategic use of προσκυνέω unique to Matthew’s Gospel. If our author is indeed a “gifted Evangelist,” then we should pay close attention to how Matthew has woven this important term into the fabric of his narrative.⁹

Indeed, a few examples suffice to suggest the literarily judicious use to which Matthew puts this term. Much like the commonly observed *inclusio* focused on Jesus’

slightly opposing position, that is, one that thinks the literary finesse of the evangelists can be over-emphasized, cf. Christopher Tuckett, review of C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke*, *Review of Biblical Literature* [<http://bookreviews.org>] (2008), esp. pg. 3.

⁷ Rudolph Pesch, “Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog (Mt 1-2). Beobachtungen zu den Zitationsformeln der Reflexionszitate,” *Bib* 48 (1967): 396. By saying that scholars have come to a greater appreciation of the literary quality of Matthew’s narrative, I am by no means suggesting all scholars affirm that Matthew’s narrative is internally coherent at every point. On a different note, by endorsing the notion that “Matthew” has carefully crafted his narrative, I do not wish to endorse a simplistic notion of “authorial intent,” as though we could get “behind” the words into Matthew’s “mind” and thereby discover what he really “meant.” Rather, it is the contours of the narrative itself – the extensive presence of literary elements like verbal repetition, *inclusios*, narrative analogies, intertextuality, etc. – by which one is compelled to attend closely to its shape on a macro and micro scale if one is to read it well. “A text is an organism, a system of internal relationships that actualizes certain possible connections and narcotizes others” (Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation* [Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1990], 148).

⁸ Cf. Larry Hurtado’s and Mark A. Powell’s similar comments in their respective articles, “Pre-70 CE Jewish Opposition to Christ-Devotion,” *JTS* 50.1 (1999): 40; Powell, “A Typology of Worship in the Gospel of Matthew,” *JSNT* 57 (1995): 3.

⁹ Cf., e.g., Hurtado, “Pre-70 Jewish Opposition to Christ Devotion,” 40 n.22; Pesch, “Der Gottessohn,” 414; Markus Müller, “Proskynese und Christologie nach Matthäus,” in *Kirche und Volk Gottes: Festschrift für Jürgen Roloff zum 70. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2000), 223.

presence with his people (Matt 1:23/28:20; cf. also 18:20),¹⁰ so also the first witnesses to Jesus' birth and the first witnesses to his resurrection render him προσκύνησις (2:2/11; 28:9, 17). Strikingly, however, when the devil requests προσκυνήσις from Jesus in the same language used for the magi's action before Jesus – πίπτω + προσκυνέω (2:11, 4:9) – Jesus cites Israel's basic confession of faith: κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις (4:10). Yet, as the story goes on Jesus receives προσκύνησις repeatedly. Among other episodes, the first time the disciples confess Jesus as "Son of God" they also render him προσκύνησις, a uniquely Matthean climax to the water-walking episode positioned at the center of the narrative (14:33/Mark 6:51-2/John 6:20-21). Or, as a final example, both of the well-known series of healings begin with the supplicant offering Jesus προσκύνησις (8:2; 9:18), both instances of which represent a change to Mark's text.

Further corroborating Matthew's προσκύνησις-christology, then, is his redaction of Markan material. While our focus will largely be on Matthew's narrative in its own right, a pattern nonetheless emerges in his handling of a number of Markan passages. Four times in material that Matthew has taken over from Mark he has either changed Mark's wording to a form of προσκυνέω or he has added it where Mark has no such gesture.¹¹ Further, he removes Mark's only two uses of προσκυνέω, a theologically significant editorial choice.¹² We will trace a number of other significant patterns in

¹⁰ A widely-recognized inclusio; cf., e.g., Adelheid Ruck-Schröder, *Der Name Gottes und der Name Jesu. Eine neutestamentliche Studie* (WMANT 80; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1999), 262.

¹¹ Matt 8:2/Mark 1:40; Matt 9:18/Mark 5:22; Matt 15:22-5/Mark 7:25-26; Matt 20:20/Mark 10:35. There is a text critical question whether Mark 1:40 originally included "and kneeling" (καὶ γονυπετῶν). For our purposes, Matthew has either changed γονυπετῶν to προσεκύνει or simply added the entire notion where Mark had nothing.

¹² Matt 8:28-29/Mark 5:6; Matt 27:29/Mark 15:19. We will comment briefly below on Matthew's removal of προσκυνέω from Markan material, but Pesch is on the right track, "Der Evangelist...übergeht 8,28f. die Proskynese des Besessenen aus Mk 5,6 und zwar zweifellos deshalb, weil er die Proskynese als einen Akt

Matthew's use of προσκυνέω throughout the body of the study,¹³ but the examples above suffice to illustrate that the προσκυνέω motif is by no means incidental to Matthew's narrative christology.

Of course, that there has been no monograph-length treatment of Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and very little attention to the literary-theological contours of προσκυνέω even in article-length studies is by no means to suggest that scholars have overlooked Matthew's use of προσκυνέω. As noted above, one hardly finds a commentary that fails to notice προσκυνέω as a favorite Matthean motif.¹⁴ But this broad consensus nonetheless continues to issue in two significant problems. First, a point to which we shall return below, προσκυνέω is commonly treated as lending to Matthew an "exalted" or "heightened" christology. Such vague language yields a consistent result – προσκυνέω does not actually do much work for the precise articulation of Matthew's christological/theological grammar either on a large scale or for individual passages. Second, despite the importance of προσκυνέω for Matthew's portrayal of Jesus, there is little consistency regarding the details of its interpretation in actual exegesis and therefore insufficient regard for its christological significance. From this second point we turn to a brief *Forschungsbericht* of προσκυνέω in Matthean studies.

Consider, for example, Davies and Allison's treatment of this linguistic pattern in Matthew. Early in their commentary series they argue that (almost) all of Matthew's uses

göttlicher Verehrung versteht, den kein Besessener leisten kann. Ebenso bestätigt die Streichung der Proskynese von Mk 15,19 in Mt 27,30 das matthäische Verständnis von προσκυνέω. Die Proskynese darf nicht zur Verspottung des Königs missbraucht werden" ("Der Gottessohn," 415).

¹³ See especially the beginning of chapter 4.

¹⁴ Cf., e.g., the influential study by Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), 229.

of προσκυνέω should be understood not only as homage/obeisance, but as actual “worship.”

[Re: Mt. 2:2] So one might translate προσκυνέω by ‘pay homage’ (so the NEB). Yet the child before whom the magi bow (2:11) is the Son of God. Moreover, ἔρχομαι followed by προσκυνέω denotes a cultic action in the LXX, and Jews tended to think of complete *proskynesis* as properly directed towards the one God ... So ‘worship’ is perhaps implied in 2:2. Almost everywhere else in Matthew such a translation is probably fitting.¹⁵

Matthew, they argue, has “blurred the distinction between the time before and after the resurrection,” freely introducing the church’s later christological views into the narrative. As a result, προσκυνέω probably connotes worship in Mathew’s usage of the term, though they seem to remain somewhat reticent about this conclusion. There are, however, two problems with their claim. First, there is a problem of literary coherence. How does the “worship” of Jesus square with Jesus’ own claim in the climactic moment of the temptation – only “the Lord God” is to be “worshiped” and served (κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις, 4:10)? If one were to resolve this by arguing Jesus *is* God, Davies and Allison would disagree, which leads to their second problem – logical coherence. That is, they argue that Jesus is not “equal” to God in Matthew, but rather “the fullest embodiment of the divine purpose . . . [but] less than God.”¹⁶ Why, then, are we to translate προσκυνέω as full-blown “worship” with reference to Jesus, yet at the same time not consider Jesus “equal” to God?¹⁷ If, as Davies and Allison argue, Matthew’s

¹⁵ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988-97), 1:237.

¹⁶ *Matthew*, 1:217.

¹⁷ Cf. also, e.g., Hubert Frankemölle’s statement: “Dieses Verbum [προσκυνέω] ist für Mt ein ‘religiöser Begriff’ wie πληροῦν . . . und stark redaktionell vermehrt” (*Jahwebund*, 166, n. 37). Frankemölle, however, does not explain exactly what he means by a “religious concept,” nor how it can function coherently for both Jesus and the Father.

Gospel reflects deeply Jewish concerns, probably mirrored in the community to which he writes, how would they have conceived of “worshiping” Jesus while he is nonetheless “less than God”?¹⁸ They offer no answer.¹⁹

A second position represents, broadly, a response to a position like that of Davies and Allison. Protecting Matthew from blatant anachronism, Peter Head argues that there is insufficient evidence that προσκυνέω connotes “divine” worship.²⁰ Rather, on the basis of lexicographical evidence and Matthew’s redactional pattern, προσκυνέω probably suggests nothing more than royal obeisance. While Matthew’s later auditors may have heard “more” in the term, such a “surplus of meaning” probably obtains only at the level of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, not necessarily in the narrative itself.²¹ Head and Carson argue, however, that Matthew himself *may* have exploited the ambiguity of προσκυνέω such that at the story-level the term retains a more mundane meaning, while later readers who

¹⁸ Cf. *Matthew*, 1:26-57, 143-47.

¹⁹ Similar is Held’s argument in “Matthew as Interpreter of the Miracle Stories,” in *Tradition and Interpretation*, 229. Despite several insights, Held’s argument remains significantly underdeveloped because he largely asserts that, because Matthew uses προσκυνέω as he does, it must mean “worship.” However, he gives no detailed exegetical argument and does not consider other alternatives (homage to Jesus as “royalty”?). Further, like Davies and Allison, he largely locates the “meaning” of προσκυνέω outside the narrative – in the later Christian community (cf. 265-275). Finally, he does not clarify how Jesus’ reception of “worship” stands in relation to Matt 4:9-10. Pesch (“Der Gottessohn”) represents a position not unlike that of Davies and Allison and Held. However, Pesch, though only briefly commenting on προσκυνέω, makes a number trenchant observations and quickly, but carefully traces Matthew’s *Sprachgebrauch* vis-à-vis προσκυνέω (cf. pp 414-415). Not unlike Held, however, he does not (1) clarify what he means by “divine” worship, (2) how that “divine” (christological) worship relates to Matt 4:8-10 (or the broader Jewish commitments to the one God), or (3) give a sustained exegetical case for his interpretation. Larry Hurtado, in his brief treatment of προσκυνέω in Matthew, largely follows Held (*How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 145-148).

²⁰ Head explicitly brings up the charge of “anachronism” (*Christology and the Synoptic Problem* [SNTSMS 94; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 131). I put “divine” in quotation marks because the term is unhelpfully ambiguous, especially in Head’s discussion of Jesus’ identity vis-à-vis “God” in Matthew.

²¹ *Ibid*, 130-31; cf. also, D. A. Carson, “Christological Ambiguities in the Gospel of Matthew,” in *Christ the Lord: Studies Presented to Donald Guthrie* (ed. Harold H. Rowden; Downer’s Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1982), 110-111.

“worship” Jesus would necessarily hear more.²² We will see that dramatic irony may well be at play in some of Matthew’s uses of προσκυνέω, but the problems for Head and Carson are also two-fold. First, for them, προσκυνέω in Matthew accrues christological significance in a manner primarily external to the narrative – in the (later) interpretive community. But this move ignores the literary patterns already noted above that suggest προσκυνέω is in fact indispensable for the narrative’s rendering of Jesus’ identity.²³ Second, we will see that Carson’s and Head’s position is exegetically weak – attending to the pattern of Matthew’s usage of προσκυνέω will not support reading it only as royal or respectful “obedience.”

Whereas the second position above argued that Matthew *would* not write his Gospel in such a blatantly anachronistic way, the third position essentially argues that Matthew *could* not have done so. That is, Matthew’s dictum in 4:9-10 and the broader “monotheistic” concerns of Second Temple Judaism make it impossible for us to think that Matthew used προσκυνέω in relation to Jesus as “worship.” Peter Fiedler states this position clearly. Commenting on Matt 4:9-10, he says:

Die Verknüpfung von kniefälliger Verehrung und Anbetung wirft ein Licht auf die (wenigen)²⁴ Stellen bei Mt, an denen Menschen vor Jesus auf die Knie fallen (s. Bereits 2,11): Mt meint eindeutig keine göttlich Verehrung Jesu; denn das wäre Gotteslästerung.²⁵

²² Head, *Christology*, 131; Carson, “Christological Ambiguities,” 111. John Nolland also suggests Matthew may have exploited the ambiguity of προσκυνέω, arguing that in most instances it should be understood as “deferential respect,” though at the water-walking episode and the resurrection, “worship” is the appropriate interpretation (*The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 42-43).

²³ Cf. Carson, “Matthew” in vol. 9 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew and Mark* (rev. ed.; eds. Tremper Longman III & David E. Garland; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 116.

²⁴ Are there really “wenigen Stellen”? As I noted above, Matthew uses προσκυνέω language more than any other Gospel writer (13x; 10x for Jesus).

²⁵ Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer), 92. With equal force, David Kupp says that the προσκύνησις the Father receives in 4:9-10 “makes it obvious” that Jesus’ reception of

Here, Fiedler suggests that the προσκύνησις Jesus receives cannot be the same as that which the “Lord God” receives, lest the narrative stand in contradiction with itself. Yet, Fiedler runs into difficulties as well. When he comes to the προσκύνησις rendered to Jesus by the disciples in 14:33, after Jesus has walked on the water, stilled the storm, and uttered “d[ie] Selbstvorstellung ‘ich bin’ ...die LXX-formel der Gottesoffenbarung,”²⁶ Fiedler fails to comment on exactly how one should interpret προσκύνησις. If, as Fiedler himself argues, Jesus appropriates the divine-revelation formula for himself and the whole passage echoes “die Exodus-Erfahrung...[und]...die Macht Gottes über das Meer,”²⁷ and as a result the disciples render him προσκύνησις, it is unclear exactly why we should *not* render προσκυνέω as “worship,” as many translations (and commentators) do. Yet, seeing this instance as full-blown “worship” leaves us with what Fiedler attempts to avoid – conflict with the clear pronouncement in 4:9-10.²⁸

προσκύνησις throughout the narrative does not mean that he is equal to “God” (*Matthew’s Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God’s People in the First Gospel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 226); cf. also, Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 76; Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbstständigkeit* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), 31.

²⁶ Fiedler, *Matthäusevangelium*, 276.

²⁷ Ibid, 275.

²⁸ Another broad proponent of this position is James D. G. Dunn. Sometimes Dunn’s language can seem to point in opposite directions, but overall his position has remained the same. For example, in a recent article Dunn argues that Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω, particularly in 14:33 and 28:9, 17, clearly indicates “worship, and, “worship” is offered to Jesus precisely because he “expresses and embodies the divine presence” (“How Did Matthew Go About Composing His Gospel?” in *Jesus, Matthew’s Gospel, and Early Christianity* [eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitis, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; New York: T&T Clark, 2011], 56-7). Elsewhere, however, Dunn distinguishes “worship” from “cultic worship,” the latter referring to terms like λατρεύω, σέβω, etc. (*Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010], e.g., 12-17). “Cultic worship,” Dunn argues, is reserved for “God,” which means the NT writers are “faithful to the teaching of their Scriptures” (17). Jesus, then, despite “embodying the divine presence” and receiving “worship” in Matthew is, apparently, not to be identified in any way with “God” who receives “cultic worship.” Three problems emerge with Dunn’s study of προσκυνέω, at least for a discussion of Matthew. First, the actual content of statements like “embodying the divine presence” is left largely unexplored. Second, he takes such a cursory glance at the material that there is very little exegetical engagement with Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω, especially on a narrative level. His very brief discussion of the Matthean texts is then subsumed in his broad initial

We can note two attempts to overcome the potential *Widerspruch* between Jesus' circumscription of προσκύνησις to "the Lord God" in 4:9-10 and the narrative's consistent assignation of προσκύνησις to Jesus. In his brief but insightful study, Markus Müller argues that "Jesu Hilfe jedoch wird so geschildert, daß sie an Gottes <Gottsein> letztlich nicht rührt und zugleich Gottes helfende und heilende Gegenwart – die Gegenwart des Emmanuel – in der Person Jesu erkennbar werden läßt."²⁹ The προσκύνησις Jesus receives from the leper (8:2), for example, is not really worship offered to Jesus, but rather ultimately honor offered to God since the leper's actions (presumably) end in making the appropriate sacrifice to God (8:4). In the end, the προσκύνησις offered to Jesus throughout the narrative "einerseits die Gottheit Gottes belassen und andererseits *die Unmittelbarkeit Jesu zu Gott* nicht verleugnen."³⁰ Mark Allen Powell comes to a similar conclusion: "The numerous depictions of Jesus as the

conclusion that, "In any event, the use of *proskynein* in the sense of offering worship to Jesus seems to be rather limited" (*Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 9-12). Third, he quotes with approval James McGrath's argument that "sacrificial worship [was] the defining feature of Jewish exclusive devotion to only one God" (53 n. 59; italics original; James McGrath, *The Only True God: Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press], 31). From this he points out that "*Christ was never understood as the one to whom sacrifice was offered*" (56, italics original). He fails to discuss, much like McGrath, (1) how Jews accounted for their exclusive devotion to God after 70 A.D., when sacrifice was no longer possible, and (2) the fact that sacrifice was not even offered to "God" in early Christian circles (at least by the time of Matthew's writing; see McGrath's very brief mention of these issues, *Only True God*, 93 and 128 n. 56). Dunn does, however, nuance his discussion of sacrifice vis-à-vis God's identity in relation to Christ as the final sacrifice and God's own participation in the sacrifice of Christ (*Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 55-6). McGrath, however, is not as circumspect as Dunn. For example, he willingly speaks of the Jewish use of "spiritualized" language for sacrifice even after the destruction of the Temple (*Only True God*, 128 n. 56), but when addressing Revelation's use of the cultic image of offering the "first fruits" to "God and to the Lamb," he discounts it as "metaphorical," whose "significance should not be pressed too far" (73).

²⁹ "Proskynese und Christologie nach Matthäus," 223 (cf. also 217, 221).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 224. (italics original)

object of προσκυνέω in Matthew do not contradict this point [4:10], for Matthew regards Jesus as one in whom God is uniquely present.³¹

The problem with both Müller's and Powell's attempts at reconciling the obvious tension in the narrative is that they fall short of explaining how for Matthew (or Second Temple Judaism) a being other than God (even God's chief representative, if there was such a being), can receive unqualified "worship."³² To say that Jesus can receive worship because of God's "unique presence" in him (Powell) or because of "die Unmittelbarkeit Jesu zu Gott" (Müller) neither lessens the force of the unqualified dictum of 4:10 nor integrates it coherently with the narrative's insistence on Jesus (not God "in" or "through" Jesus) as the object of προσκύνησις. We will see below that there were ways in which Jews could (and often did) explicitly qualify the προσκύνησις (or similar act) offered to a human being or an angel, especially if such language occurred in a context where it could be confused with the worship Israel owed to the one true God. Matthew, as we will also see, does not do this.

³¹ Powell, "A Typology of Worship," 5. In a longer version of his article (cf. *God with Us: A Pastoral Theology of Matthew's Gospel* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995], 28-61) Powell attempts to clarify how Matthew's sustained focus on Jesus as the recipient of προσκύνησις does not contradict Jesus' pronouncement in 4:10. Though brief, he argues that the answer "must lie in Matthew's Christology If Jesus qualifies for worship . . . it is because he is the Son of God (3:17; 14:33; 16:16; 27:54). He is Emmanuel, the one in whom and through whom God is present. . . . [B]y presenting Jesus as an appropriate recipient of worship Matthew does, for all practical purposes, portray Jesus as divine" (58). Powell here pushes in a direction compatible with my argument below, though I pursue it in several different directions. However, his explanation remains vague and problematic. Jesus, as Emmanuel, is still the one "in whom" God is present. What does that mean for Jesus' own identity? What exactly does "uniquely present in" mean? Is that what makes him "for all practical purposes, divine"? What does "divine" mean in relation to Matthew's rather clear understanding of the identity of Israel's God (e.g., 4:10; 11:25) and his articulation of Jesus as "Son of God"? The lack of clarity in Powell's argument stems from a correlative neglect of attending closely enough to Matthew's grammar of the words προσκυνέω and θεός.

³² Cf. Larry Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (2d. ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998).

Finally, I comment last on Horst's broad *religionsgeschichtliche* study of προσκυνέω from the early 30's, because the thirty pages or so he devotes to Matthew remains the most extended and detailed study of the Gospel's use of προσκυνέω.³³ Unfortunately, his excellent study has never been translated into English and seems to be frequently overlooked. Though working well before the onset of narrative criticism, he makes a number of trenchant literary-theological observations about Matthew's use of the term – observations often bypassed in more modern scholarship.³⁴ Like Müller and Powell above, Horst, too, notes the potential *Widerspruch* between Jesus' consistent reception of προσκύνησις and Matthew's "late Jewish" concerns, and thus opts for an interpretation similar to theirs – the προσκύνησις Jesus receives "jede Menschenvergötterung ausschloß und Gott allein die Ehre gab."³⁵ Like Müller and Powell, in the end Horst tears asunder what we will argue the narrative holds together – the worship of Jesus and a commitment to the one God of Israel.³⁶

In sum, the interpretive impasse noted above is highly significant. It suggests that there remains a rather glaring confusion, even contradiction, regarding the interpretation of one of the Gospel's central modes of narrating the proper human response to Jesus. This means nothing less than that Jesus' identity remains unclear, though, ironically, his

³³ D. Johannes Horst, *Proskynein: Zur Anbetung im Urschristentum nach ihrer religionsgeschichtlichen Eigenart* (NTF 3/2; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1932), 204-37.

³⁴ E.g., the privileging of προσκυνέω for Jesus at the outset of the narrative, which works its way into the basic thought of the Gospel's christology (209); the inclusio of 2:2, 11 with 28:9, 17 (210); Matt 14:33 as a *Vorwegnahme* to Peter's confession in 16:16 (231-32), etc. However, Horst treats προσκυνέω in the body of the narrative as meaning "less" than in 2:2, 11, 14:33, and 28:9, 17, a position we will argue against below.

³⁵ *Proskynein*, 233. Horst is so worried about "jedes anthropomorphe Mißverständnis" of the Father-Son relation that he ends up qualifying away a number of his insightful observations (cf., e.g., 233, 238).

³⁶ There is one other recent article on Matthew's use of προσκυνέω, Hak Chol Kim, "The Worship of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew," *Bib* 93 (2012): 227-41. However, Kim assumes from the very beginning that προσκυνέω connotes "worship," and he does not engage closely the problems discussed above.

identity is exactly what the Gospel is about. This impasse regarding Matthew's use of προσκυνέω is largely the result of a significant lack of attention to the literary contours of Matthew's use of προσκυνέω. Rather than attending closely to how προσκυνέω shapes, and is shaped by, the flow of the narrative, its "meaning" continues to be governed largely by concerns either external to the narrative or in rather clear contradiction to what the narrative says – e.g., the later community (Held, Davies and Allison, Carson), the "Jewish" concern to avoid blasphemy (Horst, Fiedler, Kupp, Dunn), the profane use of προσκυνέω in the first century (Head, Carson), God's reception of προσκύνησις "through" Jesus' reception of προσκύνησις (Müller, Horst).³⁷

These studies, for all of their worth, lack the detailed engagement necessary for discerning the integral role προσκυνέω plays in Matthew's narrative christology. Correlative to that lack of sustained, detailed attention to the refined integration of προσκυνέω into the overall narrative is the ubiquitous use of vague descriptors for its

³⁷ Since it has been such a large area of study/debate, I should note here my view of Matthew's Gospel vis-à-vis early Judaism. I consider Matthew's Gospel (and the communities to which it was probably written) to be closely related to early Judaism. I use the deliberately vague "closely related" because I doubt much more precision than that can be obtained with any certainty. On the whole, I still find that Graham Stanton's position on Matthew's community(ies) makes decent sense of the tension between Matthew's "Jewishness" and his polemic against Judaism (see especially Part II of his *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992]). Although those of the *intra muros* position have a strong case, I find a number of recent proponents of that position to lack nuance when speaking of Matthew's demand for law observance, not least in their lack of attention to christological issues (cf., e.g., David C. Sim, "Matthew's Anti-Paulinism: A Neglected Feature of Matthean Studies," *HTS* 58 [2002]: 766-78; but see also Sim's helpful survey that follows up on Stanton's earlier survey, "Matthew: The Current State of Research," in *Mark and Matthew I: Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in Their First-Century Settings* [eds. Eve-Marie Becker and Anders Runesson; WUNT 271; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011]). See also the judicious comments by Donald Senior ("Directions in Matthean Studies," in *The Gospel of Matthew in Current Study* [ed. David E. Aune; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2001], esp 11-12). In the end, it must be Matthew's narrative that directs the reader to the interpretive framework in which it should be read, i.e., Israel's Scriptures and their "fulfillment" in the story it will tell of Israel's Messiah (cf. Luz's comments on Matthew claiming "biblical authority," in "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," *HTR* 97.2 [2004]: 129).

importance. With it, so it is often argued, Matthew has “heightened” his christology,³⁸ “exalted” Jesus,³⁹ imbued Jesus with “divine-like” significance,⁴⁰ “developed” Mark’s christology,⁴¹ shown Jesus receiving the “highest honours.”⁴² But the actual content of such descriptors, especially with regard to articulating the coherence of Matthew’s *christological* vision with his *theological* one, is almost never explored. That is, the proper grammatical relationship between Matthew’s *christological* use of προσκυνέω with his *theological* use of προσκυνέω remains seriously underdeveloped, even incoherent on literary-theological grounds.

The Identity of θεός: The Father-Son Relation

The vagueness with which Matthew’s προσκυνέω language is explicated is parasitic on a larger linguistic problem in Matthean studies, to which our study of προσκυνέω will have to attend, namely, Matthew’s grammar of the word “God.” Most scholars who write on Matthew’s Gospel aver that Matthew has something of a “high” christology due, not least, to the Emmanuel motif that serves as an *inclusio* for the entire narrative (1:23, 28:20): in the life of Jesus God is eschatologically present with his people.

While many scholars affirm such a view, they frequently contend that Jesus is not therefore to be “identified” with God. Ulrich Luz, for example, argues, “Jesus ist im

³⁸ Dunn, “How Did Matthew,” 50, 56.

³⁹ Donald J. Versput, “The Role and Meaning of the ‘Son of God’ Title in Matthew’s Gospel,” *NTS* 33 (1987): 552, n. 41.

⁴⁰ Huratdo, “Pre-70 CE Jewish Opposition,” 41.

⁴¹ Müller, “Proskynese und Christologie,” 224, n. 62.

⁴² C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 176.

Matthäusevangelium die neue und definitive Gestalt von *Gottes* Gegenwart bei seinem Volk,⁴³ and yet also explicitly says, “[Matthew] does not identify Jesus with God.”⁴⁴ David Kupp, who wrote the well-received *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, asserts throughout his work that in Jesus the divine presence is made known, but concludes that “Matthew never openly asserts that Jesus is divine . . . the term ‘divine presence’ does not require that Jesus is God.” Matthew’s christology, Kupp argues, is more likely a “functional” christology.⁴⁵ As we saw above, Markus Müller argues that Matthew’s christology, though emphasizing the “unmediatedness” of Jesus to God, does not actually alter our perception of “God’s deity” (*die Gottheit Gottes*).⁴⁶ In fact, Davies and Allison articulate well the state of the question regarding Jesus’ relationship to God in Matthew’s Gospel: “Is Jesus ‘God’ in Matthew’s Gospel? Does he transcend messianic categories? He seems to. We only ask the question. We do not know how the first evangelist conceptualized this – how exactly he thought of the person of Jesus.”⁴⁷

Concomitant with the lack of coherence in scholarly treatment of προσκυνέω in Matthew, therefore, there is a general conceptual confusion about what it would mean for Matthew’s christology to be “high,” or for Jesus to be “divine” or “identified with God,” and how one would go about addressing such a question.⁴⁸ The question of whether Jesus

⁴³ “Eine thetische Skizze der matthäischen Christologie,” in *Anfänge der Christologie: Festschrift für Ferdinand Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 223 (italics original).

⁴⁴ Luz, *Matthew* (3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress), 1:96, cf. 3:639 (Matthew’s christology is “functional”).

⁴⁵ 220-21, cf. also p. 56.

⁴⁶ “Proskynese und Christologie,” 223.

⁴⁷ *Matthew*, 2:641-2. As we saw above, however, Davies and Allison give a rather firm “no” to this question: “Jesus is less than God” (*Matthew*, 1:26-57, 143-47).

⁴⁸ There are a number of other examples of similar conceptual confusion. Ruck-Schröder says that there is an “exklusive Verbindung zwischen Jesus und Gott,” but goes on to speak of “die funktionale Zuordnung Jesu zu Gott, die die Einzigkeit Gottes nicht antastet” (*Der Name Gottes*, 263); cf. also, Terence Donaldson, “The Vindicated Son: A Narrative Approach to Matthew’s Christology,” in *Contours of*

is “divine” or “God” in Matthew’s Gospel, that is, is often asked apart from clearly examining how Matthew articulates the identity of θεός.⁴⁹ Thus, once again, rather than attending to Matthew’s actual use of words, generalized notions of “divinity” conceived apart from the narrative are the means by which the identity of Jesus and God is articulated.⁵⁰ The result of these shortcomings is that Matthew’s christology is rendered in abstraction from his own Gospel and ultimately expressed in theologically incoherent terms. While Matthew clearly conveys the distinction between God and all created reality (e.g., 4:10; 11:25), the studies noted above lack such clarity and inadvertently place Jesus somewhere in the middle between humanity and God, which does justice neither to Matthew’s clear expression of Israel’s commitment to the one God nor to his portrait of Jesus.⁵¹

Therefore, the fifth and final chapter of this dissertation will explore in detail how Matthew’s christologically-oriented προσκυνέω language is inextricably tied to a larger linguistic pattern in the Gospel – God and Jesus as Father and Son. It goes without saying that Jesus’ divine-filial⁵² identity is integral to the Gospel’s presentation of Jesus,

Christology in the New Testament (ed. Richard Longenecker; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), 106-7; Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2006), 57-8, esp. 92; Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 72, 76; Dunn, “How did Matthew,” 58; Mogens Muller, “Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: Some Principle Features in Matthean Christology,” *NTS* 45 (1999): 166-7 (cf. also n.21).

⁴⁹ On the language of “identity,” see below.

⁵⁰ That is, when scholars are addressing Jesus’ “divinity” in Matthew, there is often little discussion of what constitutes “God’s uniqueness” (*die Einzigkeit Gottes*) in Matthew’s narrative.

⁵¹ The paradigmatic examples of such conceptual confusion can be seen, surprisingly, in two of the most highly regarded (rightly so) commentaries on Matthew – those of Luz and Davies & Allison. For Luz, see above; for Davies and Allison, see 2:641-2. These commentators claim a “high” christology for Matthew, but demur from identifying Jesus with God.

⁵² At several points in this study I will use “divine-filial” as a shorthand adjective for Jesus as “Son of God,” but it should be noted that the word “divine” in the phrase is not understood in abstraction from the narrative. Rather, it is Matthew’s Gospel that will shape our understanding of what “divine” means.

and Jesus as “Son of God” is discussed in virtually every scholarly (or popular) treatment of Matthew’s christology. What is almost wholly neglected, however, is how Matthew’s *theological* grammar is radically reshaped by his “filial” grammar;⁵³ how the narrative reshapes the reader’s articulation of κύριος ὁ θεός around the advent of the filial κύριος. If, as we will argue, the Son is the recipient of the προσκύνησις Israel owed to “the Lord God” (cf. 14.33), then Matthew’s narrative requires us to relearn how to say θεός. As we will see, this is precisely what the narrative does.

II. Interpretive Method

The animating conviction of this study’s approach to Matthew’s narrative is that it should be read as a unified, coherent whole. This is, of course, in keeping with much recent work on the Gospels and the now well-established practice of “narrative criticism.”⁵⁴ Not only has it been recognized for some time now that narrative criticism provides useful tools for reading biblical narrative in both testaments,⁵⁵ but numerous studies have also shown how such an approach illuminates Matthew’s Gospel in

⁵³ Consider, for example, Jack Kingsbury’s *Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977). Despite the fact that he has a section devoted to “Matthew’s Understanding of God,” he does not discuss in detail how the narrative actually uses the language of θεός, and how it corresponds to the Father-Son relation. Rather, Kingsbury continues to use “God” apparently as a term implicitly understood by his audience. For example, he says, “[F]ollowing Easter God reigns over the world in the person of Jesus Son of Man” (63-4). But what is the relation between the words “God” and “Jesus Son of Man”? For all of his focus on Jesus’ divine-filial identity (in numerous publications) and narrative criticism, he does not give any extended treatment to how the word θεός itself is re-articulated around the Father-Son relation.

⁵⁴ For an excellent summary, see Larry Chouinard, “Gospel Christology: A Study of Methodology,” *JSNT* 30 (1987): 21-37.

⁵⁵ E.g., Robert Alter’s justly famous *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

particular.⁵⁶ This is not surprising, given that the Gospel is in fact a carefully crafted story.⁵⁷

To read Matthew's narrative as a coherent whole, therefore, is to assume a hermeneutical posture that submits to the story "in some way . . . as a self-contained and 'closed' narrative world."⁵⁸ The coherence of the Gospel depends not primarily on hypothetical reconstructions of Matthew's community(ies) or the history of the traditions incorporated into the narrative, but rather on the story itself as "a continuous narrative presenting a meaningful development to a climax and that each episode should be understood in light of its relation to the story as a whole."⁵⁹ The implications of a such an approach become immediately apparent when turning to our explicit topic – Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and its role in his theological grammar.

First, despite many studies that treat Matthew's use of προσκυνέω in abstraction from the narrative – either as a cipher for the practices of the early community⁶⁰ or only

⁵⁶ E.g., J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); David R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (JSNTSup 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988); David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994). Other than studies explicitly devoted to Matthew's narrative structuring/design, a number of commentaries and recent dissertations utilize such an approach for the study of particular motifs in the Gospel (Commentaries: e.g., Margaret Davies, *Matthew* [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993]; David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* [New York: Crossroad, 1993]; Charles H. Talbert, *Matthew* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010]); Dissertations: e.g., nine recent dissertations published on Matthew's christology all employ, among others, narrative-critical tools [Chae, Cousland, Crowe, Hood, Huizenga, Kennedy, Kupp, Novakovic, Willitis; see bibliography for relevant bibliographic information]).

⁵⁷ As noted above, few would disagree with Beaton's assessment that Matthew's carefully crafted narrative rewards "repeated readings" (see n. 6 above).

⁵⁸ Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 33

⁵⁹ Robert Tannehill, "Tension in the Synoptic Sayings and Stories," *Int* 34 (1980): 148.

⁶⁰ E.g., Hurtado, "Pre-70 Jewish Opposition"; Bauckham "The Worship of Jesus in Early Christianity," in *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament's Christology of Divine Identity* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008], 131; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:237; Head, *Christology*, 130-31.

in relation to its *religionsgeschichtliche* background⁶¹ – the narrative itself is in fact indispensable for grasping the theological “meaning” of προσκυνέω.⁶² The larger genre of discourse in which προσκυνέω participates, that is, is not dispensable for grasping its significance. Its embeddedness in *this particular* symbolic world makes all the difference.⁶³ While the debate usually turns on what to make of the fact *that* Matthew uses προσκυνέω frequently, the more pressing question is *how* he uses it for his rendering of Jesus’ identity throughout the narrative.

The relevance of the *how* arises first and foremost from the narrative itself, since προσκυνέω plays a role in Matthew’s christology that it plays in no other canonical Gospel (or non-canonical, for that matter).⁶⁴ That is to say, attending closely to Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω is what gives rise to our study in the first place. We saw above not only that Matthew uses προσκυνέω much more frequently than the other Gospels, but that he deploys it in literarily acute ways, the eradication of which would yield a considerably different christological vision. Consider only, for example, three strategic points in the narrative where προσκυνέω plays an indispensable part in the communicative effect of each passage, which in turn shape the reader’s perception of Jesus more broadly: (1) Jesus’ first public reception – the visit of the magi – turns on the

⁶¹ See, e.g., the discussion of Karen Jobes’s article below (“Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship,” *Filologia Neotestamentaria* [1991]: 183-9).

⁶² It is the interaction of the manifold features of the text to create a particular perspective on “reality” that renders intelligible the individual parts. See Mark Allen Powell’s chapter on “Story and Discourse” in *What is Narrative Criticism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990); cf. also Bernard Lategan’s insightful article, “Reference: Reception, Redescription, and Reality,” in Bernard C. Lategan and Willem S. Vorster, *Text and Reality: Aspects of Reference in Biblical Texts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985).

⁶³ The narrative “is itself the locus in which the meaning becomes manifest” (Charles Taylor, “Language and Human Nature,” in idem, *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers 1* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], 229); Cf. also Howell, *Matthew’s Inclusive Story*, 33-6.

⁶⁴ Horst noticed long ago that προσκυνέω receives a prioritization in Matthew unlike any other Gospel (*Proskynein*, 209).

thrice-repeated phrase ἔρχομαι + προσκυνέω (see chpt 2 below); (2) the disciples' climactic confession of Jesus as "Son of God" at the center of the narrative is accompanied by their first προσκύνησις of him (14:33; see chpt 4 below); (3) the first encounter of the risen Jesus by the women and the disciples is accompanied by their προσκύνησις of him in the context of his declaration of himself as ruler of heaven and earth (28:9, 17; see chpt 2 below). All of these are unique to Matthew's Gospel; more, it is again not just *that* they occur (and only in Matthew), but *how* – at critical points in the narrative accompanied by other linguistic patterns endemic to Matthew's christology (e.g., θεοῦ υἱός). For Matthew, to respond to the filial κύριος is to respond with προσκύνησις.⁶⁵

Our manner of proceeding will largely follow the progression of Matthew's narrative, tracing how his narrative conditions the reader to hear his use of προσκυνέω language and, eventually, its grammatical connection with Jesus' identity as Son of God. Nonetheless, we will sometimes diverge from following a strictly linear trajectory in describing Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and its role in his larger theological grammar.⁶⁶ Again, however, such a move attempts to yield to the narrative's pressure – in this case to the ever-present use of "intratextuality" particularly native to Matthew's Gospel.⁶⁷ If it is true that in narratives, broadly speaking, "what remains to be read will restructure the

⁶⁵ That is to say, Matthew's προσκυνέω language is "constitutive" of his description of Jesus; to change descriptors is to change the readers' perception (cf. Taylor, "Theories of Meaning," 270-3). More below.

⁶⁶ For example, in chapter 2, after discussing προσκυνέω in the visit of the magi (2:1-12) and in the climax of the temptation (4:8-10), we jump to a number of other texts throughout the Gospel that contribute to the discussion.

⁶⁷ On Matthew's "intratextuality," cf. Allison, "Foreshadowing the Passion."

provisional meanings of the already read,”⁶⁸ it is certainly so for Matthew, whose Gospel betrays a high degree of self-referencing.⁶⁹ What Michel noticed about Matt 28:16-20 over sixty years ago – that the Gospel can be understood only “von hinten her”⁷⁰ – applies to the entire progression of the Gospel; subsequent episodes constantly shape the readers’ perception of previous material, and vice versa.⁷¹

Thus, attention to Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω not only in this or that passage, but within the flow and structure of the entire narrative will in fact yield a way of seeing back into the Gospel in a new way. The cumulative effect of tracing Matthew’s complex and thoroughgoing strategies with προσκυνέω and its role in his broader articulation of Jesus as Son of God will result in a way of reading the first Gospel that makes claims about the christology/theology of the full narrative. To refute the conclusions of such a reading therefore requires not the dismantling of one or two points of exegesis, but an entirely new way of construing Matthew’s narrative-christological patterns.

III. Identity

From the comments above we are led to make a brief comment about the language of “identity” and “narrative christology.” There is, of course, a slew of philosophical debate about how to construe “personal identity.” It is a bit like Augustine’s account of time – quid est ergo tempus? Si nemo ex me quaerat scio; si

⁶⁸ Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 23.

⁶⁹ See, for example, Anderson’s appendices of Matthew’s use of repetition (*Matthew’s Narrative Web*, 226-242).

⁷⁰ Otto Michel, “Der Abschluss des Matthäusevangeliums: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Osterbotschaft,” *EvT* 10 (1950/51): 21.

⁷¹ Cf. Allison, “Foreshadowing the Passion,” 218-19.

quaerenti explicare velim, nescio” – we have an intuitive grasp of what it is until we try to describe it!⁷² Nonetheless, to talk about “identity” is to talk about the unity of the self through time, as Paul Ricoeur has discussed in detail.⁷³ Narrative is uniquely suited to personal identity because the unity of the self requires a coherent interpretation of one’s history, i.e., a story that renders meaningful connections (an intelligible pattern) between a person’s birth, life and death, between his/her intentions and actions within a broader setting.⁷⁴ Thus, to speak of Matthew’s “narrative christology” or the “identity of Jesus” is to say that the “who” of the story is not separable from the story itself: “To answer the question of ‘Who?’ . . . is to tell the story of a life.”⁷⁵ Though there is undoubtedly more to be said about identity and its connection with narrative, its primary importance for our purposes can be stated further in two points.

First, if the story is the indispensable means by which we recognize “who” Jesus is, then it cannot be “said” in any other way – we cannot reduce Matthew’s christology to a series of propositions or translate it into another idiom that gets at what he really

⁷² *Confessions*, XI.14, quoted approvingly by Wittgenstein, *PI* §89. References to Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* are taken from his *Philosophische Untersuchungen/Philosophical Investigations* (trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte; rev. 4th ed.; Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). Hereafter referred in the body of the text as *PI*.

⁷³ cf. *Oneself as Another* [Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992], Studies 5 and 6. See C. Kevin Rowe’s discussion in *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (BZNW 139; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 19-21.

⁷⁴ See Alasdair MacIntyre’s chapter entitled “The Virtues, the Unity of a Human Life, and the Concept of a Tradition,” in *After Virtue* (3d. ed.; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007 [orig. 1981]). See also, George W. Stroup, *The Promise of Narrative Theology: Recovering the Gospel in the Church* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 100-31 and Hans Frei’s essay “Theological Reflections on the Accounts of Jesus’ Death and Resurrection,” in *The Identity of Jesus Christ: The Hermeneutical Basis of Dogmatic Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1997), esp. 17-19; also chpt 9 of the same work.

⁷⁵ Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 20, citing Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative* (trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988 [French, 1985]), 3.246.

“means.”⁷⁶ Rather, our task is to render Matthew’s narrative-theological grammar more perspicuous by “making connections” through our descriptive analysis, that is, through the grammar of our own text.⁷⁷ More particularly for our purposes, we will attempt to highlight the shape of Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω and its role in his narrative rendering of the identity of the Son of God.

Second, the notion of narrative identity allows for a way of articulating the “who” of the story that simultaneously allows for a solidity of the self even while that self’s identity is construed in relation to another.⁷⁸ The benefit of such a conceptual schema will become apparent when we turn from Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω to its connection with his articulation of Jesus as “Son of God” vis-à-vis the one he addresses repeatedly as “Father.” In chapter five we will attend to Jesus’ unique “paternal” idiom for κύριος ὁ θεός in concert with the narrative’s focus on Jesus’ identity as the filial κύριος. This, in turn, will illuminate the logic of Matthew’s theological grammar – the identity of θεός comes to expression in the story of the paternal and filial κύριος.

IV. Other Interpretive Tools

To read the Gospel in the way described above is not, however, to jettison history or other standard forms of inquiry into the Gospels. As to the former, Umberto Eco’s now

⁷⁶ Thus the failure of much “titular christology.” Cf. Burridge, “From Titles to Stories”; also J. D. Kingsbury, *The Christology of Mark’s Gospel* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 25-45; M. Eugene Boring, “The Christology of Mark: Hermeneutical Issues for Systematic Theology,” *Semeia* 30 (1984): 128-33; Leander E. Keck, “Toward the Renewal of New Testament Christology,” *NTS* 32 (1986): 362-77.

⁷⁷ Cf. P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place in 20th Century Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 101, 112; Brad Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar: Changing the Postmodern Subject* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 99, 109; Also, see the comments by Stanley Hauerwas in his “Introduction” to *Matthew* (BTCB; Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 19.

⁷⁸ See especially Rowe’s discussion in *Early Narrative Christology*, 21-23.

popular notion of “cultural encyclopedia” will play a significant role in situating us to hear how the language of προσκυνέω could be used in Matthew’s day. The narrative not only creates a certain readerly competence by actualizing or neutralizing certain interpretations,⁷⁹ but also anticipates the reader’s embeddedness in a common pool of cultural knowledge that allows for that “actualization” of materials from the encyclopedia.

As Rowe has argued, calling attention to an author’s cultural encyclopedia is not simply to reproduce the now-pedestrian assertion that we need to do “background” work.⁸⁰ Rather, taking into account the use of προσκυνέω in Matthew’s larger encyclopedia gives us a better understanding of the historically-situated reasoning in which Matthew participates – first century Jewish/Jewish-Christian life – and thus a more textured understanding of the logic of Matthew’s own language.⁸¹ As a result, the first chapter will take a brief account of προσκυνέω in Matthew’s cultural encyclopedia, and we will return to a full discussion of Jewish “agency” language in chapter 4 when considering the disciples’ προσκύνῃσις before Jesus as Son of God in 14:33.

The historically-sensitive narrative reading for which I am arguing thereby also includes elements of redaction criticism. The largely-accepted (and convincing) theory of

⁷⁹ Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation*, 148-9; see the brief discussion of Eco’s notion of the model reader in Solomon Pasala, *The “Drama” of the Messiah in Matthew 8 and 9: A Study from a Communicative Perspective* (EUS 33/866; Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), 65-71.

⁸⁰ C. Kavin Rowe, *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 8-9.

⁸¹ See further the discussion of “grammar” below. Cf. Rowe, *World Upside Down*, 9 (here Rowe draws on Alasdair MacIntyre’s notion of “historically situated rationality” in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* [Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991], 65 passim). See also Joel Green’s argument that a certain form of historical-criticism “protects the text from our tendency to recruit its words and phrases for our own ends” (“Rethinking ‘History’ for Theological Interpretation,” *JTI* 5.2 [2011]: 172).

Markan-priority has undeniable benefits for discerning unique concerns in Matthew and Luke. This is certainly so when an identifiable redactional pattern emerges, such as with Matthew's use of προσκυνέω vis-à-vis his dependence on Mark. As a result, where a comparison with Mark is relevant, I will draw attention to the parallel, but always with a view toward the overall arc of Matthew's narrative.⁸²

Finally, accounting for the double tradition by appealing to so-called Q remains, I think, largely unconvincing; too many questions remain for me to make any substantive redactional-exegetical claims from it. While a good case has been made for Luke's use of Matthew,⁸³ I still think it too tidy to account for all the data,⁸⁴ since at a number of points it certainly looks as though Matthew may be using Luke.⁸⁵ The common response would be – “Of course! They are both using Q!” But the so-called minor agreements and the undoubted continuing influence of oral history/tradition problematize accounting for the double tradition with Q, especially in a way that could serve as the basis for exegetical decisions.

It will be instructive, nonetheless, to set Matthew and Luke alongside one another at points for the purpose of highlighting Matthew's particular handling of material

⁸² That is, the narrative's theological grammar is not best determined by the author's editorial activity, but by the integrity of the story as a whole (cf. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 21-2).

⁸³ Mark S. Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and the Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2002).

⁸⁴ E. P. Sanders' and Margaret Davies' work appropriately complexifies any simple solution (*Studying the Synoptic Gospels* (London: SCM Press, 1989).

⁸⁵ An unpopular position and one for which I would not want to argue strongly, but which further problematizes any simple solution. Martin Hengel held a variant of this position (*The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of Jesus Christ: an Investigation of the Collection and Origin of the Canonical Gospels* (trans. John Bowden; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2000), 68-70, and n. 287 (German edition: *Die Vier Evangelien und das eine Evangelium von Jesus Christus: Studien zu ihrer Sammlung und Entstehung* [WUNT 224; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008], 126-132, and n. 368).

common to them both. Such comparison can at least bring into sharper focus concerns peculiar to the Matthean narrative.

V. The “Grammar” of Matthew’s Narrative

To this point we have repeatedly used the word “grammar” to articulate the way Matthew’s narrative as a whole renders intelligible the various words he uses. It would be helpful, therefore, to give a brief summary of what we mean by “grammar.” This is no place to review all of the modern developments in linguistics since, at least, Saussure. Neither is it to try to articulate a full theory of “how words mean,” since our primary focus is on Matthew’s narrative (and better left to more competent philosophers of language).⁸⁶ Rather, we will focus briefly on how some developments in modern linguistics, especially through Wittgenstein, provide certain conceptual resources for more effectively grasping the logic of Matthew’s προσκυνέω language. Throughout the study, most of these resources lie in the background and will come to explicit expression only occasionally.

It is Wittgenstein’s notion of the nature of philosophical inquiry and his corresponding focus on “grammar” that provide the conceptual shape to this “investigation” into Matthew’s theological language. For Wittgenstein, the resolution of obstinate conceptual confusion could be obtained not through “new discoveries” (Erfahrung) or more complex “explanations” attaining to ever-higher levels of abstraction, but rather through a “perspicuous representation” of our practice of using

⁸⁶ See Taylor’s insightful essays – “Language and Human Nature” and “Theories of Meaning” – in *Philosophical Papers*.

words, the misuse of which has given rise to our conceptual confusion in the first place (cf. *PI* §109).⁸⁷ To talk about “grammar,” then, is to talk about rules for the use of words which arise not in a metalinguistic realm held in common by all, but rather “rules” which evidence themselves in concrete situations in life.⁸⁸ It is not by getting behind the words to “something else” that we gain understanding, but rather by attending more carefully to the use of the words that have always been before us (cf. *PI* §129).⁸⁹

Wittgenstein’s notion of grammar is relevant to our study because many scholars’ approach to Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω issues in conceptual confusion, at least some of which is the result of philosophical-linguistic mistakes. A few examples, to use Wittgenstein’s method, will further illuminate the problem and solution.

In her article “Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship,”⁹⁰ Karen Jobes begins with the (correct) observation that “[m]odern linguistic theory teaches that the meaning of a given word is not located in the word per se but in the relationship a word has to other words in the context of a given occurrence and in contrast to other words which share its semantic domain.”⁹¹ Despite this and other illuminative observations in the article, Jobes’ discussion of προσκυνέω becomes problematic. I choose Jobes here as an example not because her discussion is particularly egregious (in fact, it is not), but because she represents interpretive moves so commonly made. She says:

⁸⁷ Cf. P. M. S. Hacker, “Metaphysics as the Shadow of Grammar,” in *Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations: Critical Essays* (ed. Meredith Williams; New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 179-81; Marie McGinn, *Wittgenstein and the Philosophical Investigations* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 26.

⁸⁸ Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place*, 107-8.

⁸⁹ Paul L. Holmer, “Wittgenstein: ‘Saying’ and ‘Showing,’” *NZSTR* (1980): 231.

⁹⁰ *Filología Neotestamentaria* 4 (1991): 183-9.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 183-4.

προσκυνέω is the most frequently used word for worship in the New Testament. However, “worship” is only one of the three senses of this verb. προσκυνέω also has the sense of paying political homage and the sense of entreaty. προσκυνέω is used in the New Testament with the sense of entreaty or petition. In the Gospel narratives the subject of the verbal action expressed by προσκυνέω is often found petitioning Jesus for assistance or healing (e.g., Matt 20:20; John 12:20). When it is used in this sense of entreaty a religious connotation is not implied by the word. To understand προσκυνέω as referring to worship when used in this sense of entreaty, though perhaps theologically justifiable in reference to Jesus, is not lexically justifiable. When προσκυνέω is used in this sense of entreaty, it is properly synonymous with γονυπετέω, which also means to entreat another human being on bended knee (eg. Matt 17:14; 27:29; Mark 1:40; 10:17) When used in this [third: worship] sense προσκυνέω expresses submission to God’s supreme authority [T]his use of προσκυνέω might be considered a metaphorical expression stemming from the sense of προσκυνέω as paying political homage to royalty.⁹²

Several problems emerge with Jobes’ description of how προσκυνέω “means.”

To begin, she posits a hard distinction between “three senses” of προσκυνέω, as though the three senses – worship, political homage, and entreaty – were neatly separable.⁹³ But a quick glance at the Septuagint, where Israel’s κύριος is “worshiped” (προσκυνέω) as “king” (with its political connotations)⁹⁴ and “entreaty” is often an integral part of “worship,” suggests that one cannot so easily decipher between the senses or “meanings” of προσκυνέω.⁹⁵

⁹² Ibid, 186-7.

⁹³ It should be noted that Jobes’ third gloss of προσκυνέω as “entreaty” is somewhat misleading. προσκυνέω is often used in the context of someone “entreating” God, a king, etc. and thus suggests something like “submission” or “respectful deference” that *accompanies* entreating a superior. But it is rarely (ever?) itself glossed as “entreaty.” For example, none of *BDAG*’s definitions for προσκυνέω includes something like “entreaty.”

⁹⁴ E.g., Zech 14:7: καὶ ἔσται ὅσοι ἐὰν μὴ ἀναβῶσιν ἐκ πασῶν τῶν φυλῶν τῆς γῆς εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ τοῦ προσκυνῆσαι τῷ βασιλεῖ κυρίῳ παντοκράτορι καὶ οὗτοι ἐκείνοις προστεθήσονται.

⁹⁵ For example, twice in Ps 98:5-9 (LXX) all are called to “worship” the Lord (προσκυνέω), which is followed by the affirmation that the Lord heard those who “called upon” him. “Worship” and “entreaty” are intimately related (cf. also, e.g., Pss 131:7-10; 137:2-3)

The hard distinction Jobes makes between the three senses points, however, to a more significant philosophical mistake. She seems to assume that the word προσκυνέω represents an “idea” separable from the word and the one speaking it. There are three meanings “out there,” existing in abstraction from particular uses, and Matthew (or whoever) basically picks out one of them when using προσκυνέω.⁹⁶ Indeed, Jobes says, Matthew just as well could have used γονυπετέω for προσκυνέω because both mean the same thing – “entreaty.” Thus she can also cite Matthew’s and John’s use of προσκυνέω as instantiations of the generalized meaning “entreaty,” and later Josephus’s use of προσκυνέω for “political homage,” which Matthew also uses in the visit of the magi.⁹⁷

With such moves Jobes at least partially exemplifies what Charles Taylor has called the “representationalist” or “truth-conditional” view of language/semantics.⁹⁸ The meaning of a word is what it “designates;” προσκυνέω points to something else – one of three (or two) things – regardless of who is using it, and it largely “acquires meaning by being associated with ideas in the mind of the speaker.”⁹⁹ What is most basic is the “literal” meaning which is determined “by its role in a straight, accurate, unadorned depiction of what it applies to.”¹⁰⁰ Language is most basically descriptive, and other uses are “metaphorical extensions” of this ordinary descriptive vocabulary.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ Or, rather, from her final comments above, it seems that προσκυνέω really has two basic meanings – political homage and entreaty – which one can apply “metaphorically” to God. On her logic, one might reduce προσκυνέω to one basic meaning – entreaty – which then gets metaphorically applied to superiors (e.g., royalty or g/God[s]).

⁹⁷ “Distinguishing the Meaning,” 186-7.

⁹⁸ “Theories of Meaning,” 250.

⁹⁹ Hacker, *Wittgenstein’s Place*, 129.

¹⁰⁰ Taylor, “Theories of Meaning,” 284.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 287.

The significant lacuna in Jobes' discussion is the "constitutive" dimension of language; that the descriptions we make are "not external to the reality described, leaving it unchanged, but rather constitutive of it."¹⁰² Our particular descriptions of phenomena in fact have the power to alter our perception; the terms we use, especially for essential concerns like identity descriptions (communal and personal), are not themselves dispensable, but bring to expression our concerns "in just this shape."¹⁰³ Language, in other words, "cannot be prized off the world, leaving the world as it is," but rather contributes to the world of experience; "the possibility and limits of thought are determined by the possibility and limits of expression."¹⁰⁴ Those possibilities come about only through participation in a particular way of being in the world, interwoven with the life and practices of particular language-users.¹⁰⁵ Thus, "meaning" is not something existing outside a given language use which is then appropriated for a particular situation,¹⁰⁶ but is rather a speaker-specific construct bound up with his/her "training" in a way of life.¹⁰⁷ Words themselves "'neither refer or [sic] fail to refer.' Rather, it is people who refer and who use words to refer."¹⁰⁸

All of this is relevant to Jobes' example above and our discussion of προσκυνέω. Her use of abstract ostensive definitions for προσκυνέω and the application of them to

¹⁰² Ibid, 270.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 277; cf. Anthony C. Thiselton's comments on Wittgenstein's notion of language's effect on how we "see" (*The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980], 402).

¹⁰⁴ Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar*, 185; the quotation is from Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place*, 129.

¹⁰⁵ Hacker, *Wittgenstein's Place*, 125; Taylor, "Theories of Meaning," 280.

¹⁰⁶ For an excellent discussion of Wittgenstein's attempt to overcome the false dichotomy between "language" and "world," see Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar*, chpt. 3 and especially chpt. 5, 180-192.

¹⁰⁷ *PI* §§43, 86; cf. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons*, 360.

¹⁰⁸ Richard G. Rollefson, "Thinking with Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein: The Philosophical Theology of Paul L. Holmer" (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, 1994), 110, partially quoting Holmer, "Language and Theology: Some Critical Notes," *HTR* 58 (1965): 121.

particular examples fails to take into account the broader “language game” in which the word participates, which for our purposes, at least means the whole of Matthew’s narrative if not also the early Christian way of life in which he participates.¹⁰⁹ She does not attend closely, that is, to the particular “pattern” of usage in Matthew’s Gospel.¹¹⁰ Rather, Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in situations where Jesus is “entreated” is made to fit a more general pattern, stultifying the narrative’s ability to shape how we hear it. Even though Jobes attends to the more immediate context in which the word occurs (a situation of entreaty), she fails to relate προσκυνέω in Matthew (or John for that matter) to the larger narrative as the “meaning-determining discourse”¹¹¹ and the role this specific language plays in shaping the readers’ perception of Jesus.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ That is, our primary means for entering into Matthew’s particular form of discursive reasoning is quite obviously his narrative, but also one must consider the broader first century Jewish/Jewish-Christian practices that constitute a part of the way he uses words. The problems for our particular study vis-à-vis concrete forms of life in early Christianity are: (1) there is much debate about the development of early christology (e.g., How quickly? Where?); (2) how fully the practices discerned in one segment of early Christianity (e.g., churches established by Paul) can be assumed for other segments of early Christianity (e.g., churches with whom Matthew was associated?); (3) how well can we discern the practices of a community from the narratives of Jesus’ life (i.e., mirror reading)? These constitute enormous areas of research. Here I can only say that I think there was more communication/shared forms of life between the various early Christian communities than is sometimes recognized (see, e.g., the first two chapters in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* [ed. Richard Bauckham; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998]). Regarding developments in early christology, on the whole I agree with the assessments of Martin Hengel (*Studies in Early Christology* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995]), Larry W. Hurtado (*Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003]) and Richard Bauckham (*Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies of the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008]). On a different note, I am by no means saying that ostensive definitions are useless, a point Wittgenstein certainly does not argue. Rather, as he points out, the problem is that ostensive definitions can be misinterpreted in almost every case when treated in abstraction from an already-existing language game/form of life (cf. *PI* §§ 28-30).

¹¹⁰ Cf. Kallenberg, *Ethics as Grammar*, 166.

¹¹¹ Cf. C. Kavin Rowe, “Acts 2.36 and the Continuity of Lukan Christology,” *NTS* 53 (2007): 50

¹¹² In linguistic terms, she has neglected “pragmatics” (cf. Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983]; see also his brief essay “Pragmatics” available on the Max Planck Society’s publication repository online [article 3.9.73]). Jobes is representative of a common problem in biblical studies; one repeatedly encounters arguments that attempt to define προσκυνέω in Matthew in a manner largely abstracted from the narrative-linguistic context in which it occurs (cf., e.g., Carson, “Matthew,” 116 n. 2; Fiedler, *Matthäusevangelium*, 57-8; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 69; Head, *Christology and the Synoptic Problem*, 129-30).

Thus, to take one more example, both Josephus and Matthew can use προσκυνέω to mean the same thing – “political homage.”¹¹³ But not only do Matthew and Josephus participate in different patterns of life – Christian and non-Christian – they are also, of course, writing about widely divergent subject matter, all of which impact their use of words.¹¹⁴ We gain insight into Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω not by selecting from a set of “senses” that προσκυνέω intrinsically carries along with it;¹¹⁵ rather, “once one understands how a word fits into the discourse, by and large, one already has the meaning of the word.”¹¹⁶ And this discursive understanding obtains only through a lucid representation of a particular speaker’s manner of using words.

This is not, of course, to say that each speaker “makes up” the meaning of words as s/he goes along or that words are not chosen for specific reasons. Quite the opposite. While words do not have intrinsic meaning in themselves, they do have histories of usage in particular contexts: “Symbols, words, and concepts have histories and those histories are essential features of the forms of life in which they are rooted.”¹¹⁷ Clearly Matthew participates in the larger Greco-Roman culture of the first century and many other

¹¹³ Jobes, “Semantic Domain,” 186.

¹¹⁴ Clearly Matthew and Josephus also participate in overlapping patterns of life – i.e., lives dominated by Rome in the first century, lives deeply shaped by Israel’s scriptures, etc. But the apocalyptic impact the advent of God’s Son has quite obviously reshaped the way Matthew and his community(ies) see everything; their total way of life has been reoriented around the Son.

¹¹⁵ Despite Jobes’ assertion that words gain their sense from their context, she nonetheless separates “theological justification” from “lexical justification,” as though προσκυνέω inherently means one of three things in abstraction from the theological discourse in which it occurs. On my view, “lexical justification” is, if not a meaningless category, only helpful in the most general way – we don’t use words to mean whatever we wish. See more below.

¹¹⁶ Holmer, “Wittgenstein: ‘Saying’ and ‘Showing,’” 231; Thus Jobes ignores Wittgenstein’s insight that “[w]hen language-games change, then there is a change in concepts, and with the concepts the meanings of words change” (Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* [Germ. and Eng.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1969, 65).

¹¹⁷ Stroup, *The Promise of Narrative Theology*, 206; cf. also C. Kevin Rowe, “God, Greek Philosophy, and the Bible: A Response to Matthew Levering,” *JTI* 4.2 (2010): 72 n. 7.

“cultures” that shape his linguistic competencies.¹¹⁸ But for just that reason the words he uses have “a multitude of familiar paths that lead off . . . in all directions” (*PI* §525), the understanding of which requires a careful description of their pattern of usage – their “grammar” – in concrete situations.¹¹⁹ This is especially so for those words that play a constitutive role in Matthew’s theological reasoning, both because (1) the narrative’s primary subject matter – broadly speaking, what Father, Son, and Spirit are doing to establish the “kingdom of the heavens” – is basic to the plot and also (2) because Matthew’s theological language shapes his readers at the most fundamental level – their view of “God.”¹²⁰

VI. The Argument

Words become particularly interesting and powerful when they are deeply rooted in a community’s theological discourse and are then “recreated, extended or altered” in a way that “constitutes and sustains the speech community” in new ways.¹²¹ προσκυνέω is just such a theologically constitutive word for Matthew’s Gospel. Its significance for the narrative emerges when one attends to its history of usage in scriptural and contemporary Jewish literature (the focus of chapter one) while simultaneously setting it beside Matthew’s christologically momentous appropriation of it (chapters 2-4). By tracing

¹¹⁸ I use “culture” here along the lines briefly set out by Alasdair MacIntyre in “Epistemological Crises, Dramatic Narrative, and the Philosophy of Science,” in *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology* (eds. Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), esp. 139.

¹¹⁹ There is, of course, a happy overlap between this notion of “grammar” and a narrative-critical approach to the Gospels, since the latter attends to the way in which the narrative renders coherent the “world” it constructs by means of literary devices, certain uses of language, etc.

¹²⁰ Cf. Rowe, *World Upside Down*, 17-18.

¹²¹ Cf. Taylor’s helpful description of the language of “equality” in ancient Sparta so constitutive of its identity (“Theories of Meaning,” 272-7).

closely Matthew's use of προσκυνέω throughout the narrative, we will see that it serves his larger christological vision of binding together the identity of Father and Son.¹²²

More specifically, Matthew takes up προσκυνέω language in ways that evoke Israel's commitment to the one God while consistently and strategically applying it to Jesus. This initially creates, in Riffaterre's helpful phrase, an "ungrammaticality" – Jesus receives from the magi (2:11) what he soon thereafter says belongs only to κύριος ὁ θεός (4:9-10).¹²³ These initial appearances of προσκυνέω and their literary-theological relationship will be the focus of chapter 2. The repetition of christologically-focused προσκυνέω language as the narrative progresses further intensifies the "ungrammaticality," especially when taking into account the literary, linguistic, and redactional moves with which Matthew combines this language (chapter 3). While on the "story" level there remains a certain theological ambiguity in the characters' προσκύνησις, on the "discourse" level the reader is lead to hear "worship" in the characters' actions.¹²⁴

Matthew's theological grammar comes to concentrated expression in 14:22-33, to which we will devote an entire chapter (4). There the "ungrammaticality" becomes most poignant, where Jesus walks on the sea, Peter calls on him as "Lord" for "salvation," and the disciples render him προσκύνησις as Son of God. But it is also there that the

¹²² In yet another debt to my *Doktorvater*, I take the language of "binding the identity" (*Verbindungsidentität*) from Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology*, 27-29.

¹²³ Though originally applying the language of "ungrammaticality" more specifically to poetry (Michael Riffaterre, *Semiotics of Poetry* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978]), he also applies it more broadly to other literary texts (e.g., "The Interpretant in Literary Semiotics," in *Reading Eco: An Anthology* [ed. Rocco Capozzi; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997]). Cf. also Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (aug. ed.; New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 81.

¹²⁴ That is, there is a degree of dramatic irony at play, especially in the uses of προσκυνέω in the main body of the narrative.

narrative's "decoding" of the ungrammaticality becomes most clear. While Jesus' identity and the worship he receives attendant to that identity is the focus of 14:22-33, there is not a *Vermischung* of the paternal and filial κύριοι, a relativizing of the worship the Son receives, or a rivalry between Father and Son. Rather, he is worshiped as the *Son*, who necessarily derives his identity from the Father, even while the Father's identity cannot be articulated, in Matthew's Gospel, apart from his Son. This latter point is the burden of chapter five – the identity of Israel's κύριος takes shape around the Father and the Son. To articulate the identity of "God" in Matthew, that is, requires telling the story of his Son.

Wittgenstein once said that "[e]ssence is expressed by grammar" (*PI*, §371; italics original).¹²⁵ To trace the "essence" of θεός in Matthew, in Wittgenstein's sense, is to trace the christological shape of Matthew's προσκυνέω language and its embeddedness in the larger story of the apocalypse of the Father in the Son, and the Son in the Father. The grammar of προσκυνέω peculiar to Matthew's Gospel situates the reader repeatedly to hear the *christological* instances of προσκυνέω in dialectical relation to the *theological* instances of the same word. The linguistic coherence of assigning the προσκύνησις reserved for κύριος ὁ θεός to both θεός and Ἰησοῦς turns on the narrative-wide articulation of those two central characters as Father and Son.

¹²⁵ "Das *Wesen* ist in der Grammatik ausgesprochen."

CHAPTER 1 προσκυνέω and Matthew's Cultural Encyclopedia

I. Introduction

While it is primarily Matthew's particular use of προσκυνέω that will situate us to discern its meaning in the course of the narrative, it will nonetheless be hermeneutically fruitful to take a brief inventory of προσκυνέω in the larger cultural encyclopedia of Matthew's day. Recognizing the manifold ways in which προσκυνέω could be used will sensitize us to how Matthew's narrative actualizes or neutralizes certain of its connotations for the "model reader."¹ Matthew's discursive reasoning is embedded, that is, in a broader historically-conditioned context, the knowledge of which will enhance our ability to engage his use of προσκυνέω.

II. προσκυνέω: Its use in the OT, Early Jewish and Early Christian Literary Works

Several scholars have competently summarized how προσκυνέω language was employed in early Jewish and Christian literature, and as a result, we can give a general summary rather quickly. All are agreed on the relatively broad semantic range of προσκυνέω. It is commonly employed in the Septuagint and early Jewish and Christian

¹ On "cultural encyclopedia," see Umberto Eco, *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1984), esp. 46-86. For an excellent summary of Eco, see Leroy Huizenga, *The New Isaac: Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 131; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 21-74. Along with Eco's notion of the "encyclopedia," see also Iser's notion of the "reader's repertoire" (Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1974]). More narrowly, but similarly, Roland Barthes spoke of the *déjà-lu* (cf. Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* [Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1984], 19).

literature with reference to the “worship” Jews reserve for the one God of Israel,² and conversely, to idolatry involving pagan deities/idols.³ It also frequently connotes reverence or honor to a superior, usually royalty.⁴ Further, all agree that, because of the relatively wide range of figures to whom it could be applied, “the meaning of προσκύνησις is not self-evident,” but requires a careful probing of the literary context in which it occurs to decipher the nuance intended.⁵ Certainly προσκυνέω fits within the now-commonly recognized axiom that the larger discourse and “form of life” in which a word is embedded makes all the difference.⁶

² E.g., Gen 24:26; Exod 24:1; 1 Sam 1:3; Ps 5:8; Isa 27:13, 66:23; Jer 33:2; Ezek 46:2-3, 9; Neh 8:6; Jdt 6:18; Tob 5:14; 1 Macc 4:55; Sir 50:17; Ep Jer 1:5; Bel 1:4; Philo, *Gig* 1:54; Jos., *Ant.* 8:119, 9:269, 20:164; Jos., *J.W.* 4:324; *1 En.* 10:21; *Sib. Or.* 3:29; *T. Benj.* 10:7; *T. Job* 3:4; *T. Ab.* A 20:13; *Apoc. Mos.* 7:2; *Odes Sol.* 1:17; *Mart. Pol.* 17:3 (with ref. to Christ).

³ E.g., Exod 20:5; Deut 4:19, 17:3; Isa 2:8, 20, 44:15; Jer 1:16, 8:2, 16:11; Ezek 8:16; Dan 3:5; Jdt 8:18; Bel 1:4; Philo, *Conf.* 1:49; Jos., *Ag. Ap.* 1:239; *Syb. Or.* 3:30, 23:27; *2 Clem.* 1:6, 3:1; *Let. Aris.* 1:135-138; *Mart. Isa.* 1:9; *Diogn.* 2:4-5; *Mart. Pol.* 12:2.

⁴ E.g., Gen 27:29; Ruth 2:10; 2 Sam 14:22; Ps 71:11 (LXX); Isa 49:23; Esth 3:2; Dan 2:46-7 (God as ultimate object?); Jdt 10:23, 14:7 (It is worth noting that in Judith, her προσκύνησις before Holofernes in 10:23 is, for the reader, clearly insincere and to be read in contrast with her sincere προσκύνησις before Israel’s God [10:8, cf. 8:18; also 5:8; 6:18; 16:18]. Further, the προσκύνησις she receives in 14:7 from Achior is immediately qualified by his acknowledgment of what the “God of Israel” had done [14:9-10]); Philo, *Opif.* 1:83; Jos., *Ant.* 1:335, 7:211; *Apoc. Sedr.* 5:2; *T. Zeb.* 3:6; *T. Jos.* 13:5; *Let. Aris.* 1:177; *Jos. Asen.* 5:10, 28:2. Cf. also J. Lionel North, “Jesus and Worship, God and Sacrifice,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* (eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck; Wendy E.S. North; JSNTSup 263; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 186-203; Larry W. Hurtado, “The Binitarian Shape of Early Christian Worship,” in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (eds. Carey C. Newman, et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 187-213; Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 173-4.

⁵ North, “Jesus and Worship,” 195; Hurtado, “The Binitarian Shape,” 190.

⁶ James Barr being the most frequently-cited proponent of such a view (*The Semantics of Biblical Language* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961]). Wittgenstein’s *PI* likewise demonstrates this phenomenon repeatedly, particularly his notion of language’s embeddedness in “forms of life” (*PI*, §19; cf. also §199). It is important to note, however, that Wittgenstein was not putting forward a general “theory” of meaning when he said that “meaning is use” (cf. Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1980], 376-8). Also, while Wittgenstein’s use of “form of life” was probably too specific to include something as broad as the entire “Jewish” way of being in the world, the particular shape of Jewish “worship” seems a good candidate for Wittgenstein’s notion of form of life (cf. Fergus Kerr, *Theology After Wittgenstein* [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986], 28-31).

As a result, I will often leave προσκυνέω untranslated, offering a translation only when I intend to decipher the connotations of one use from another. “Worship” will be reserved for that activity which early Jewish and Christian communities, following the Jewish Scriptures, deemed appropriate only for the one God of Israel.⁷ “Obeisance” will serve for those instances where προσκυνέω means something more like “honor” or “homage” an inferior might pay to a superior, with no “deification” of the recipient intended.

With that said, this general assessment of προσκυνέω masks some important tendencies of its usage in the OT, Second Temple literature, and the New Testament that will further illuminate the cultural encyclopedia in which the Gospel of Matthew is embedded. Gaining this sensitivity to Matthew’s particular encyclopedia is not at all to suggest we can directly import this or that meaning of προσκυνέω into Matthew’s Gospel from this or that text, and thereby commit a rather simplistic semantic fallacy. Rather, in light of some recent discussions of προσκυνέω that exploit its broad semantic range to argue for its lack of “divine” significance in Matthew’s narrative,⁸ we think it important to correct that tendency by considering more precisely its use in the texts and contexts to

⁷ On the fact that first century Jews were, on the whole, exclusively devoted to the one God of Israel, see n. 82 below. I will largely avoid the language of “monotheism,” because (1) it does not reflect Matthew’s own language, (2) there are ongoing disagreements about its usefulness, (3) its history of usage may distort the reader’s perception of its use in my argument, and (4) I find other language more descriptive for the phenomenon of Israel’s devotion to its God. For a defense of the term “monotheism,” while recognizing some of its inherent problems, see Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology: A Study in Early Judaism and in the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (WUNT 70; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1995), 15-21.

⁸ So, e.g., North, “Jesus and Worship”; Karen Jobes, “Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship,” *Filología Neotestamentaria* 4 (1991): 183-9.

which Matthew is most deeply indebted, viz., Israel's Scriptures and first century Jewish/Jewish-Christian life.⁹

Since by all accounts Matthew is deeply indebted to the OT,¹⁰ and the author of the Gospel probably expected his audience to be familiar with the Jewish Scriptures,¹¹ we will begin there. While we will not canvas the entire OT, it will be helpful to survey briefly those OT books to which Matthew is particularly indebted, since they are the larger frame into which Matthew fits his portrait of Jesus. Further, although Matthew's use of the OT is complex and highly debated,¹² at this point we can simply note that Matthew draws most frequently, both with explicit quotations and (probable) allusions, on Isaiah, the Psalms, Deuteronomy, Exodus, Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, and Daniel.¹³

⁹ For my view of Matthew's close relation to early Judaism, see the Introduction (n. 37).

¹⁰ Matthew not only cites and alludes to the OT frequently, but regularly draws on the larger context of the passage to which he alludes/cites. For two excellent studies of this phenomenon in Matthew, see Richard B. Hays, "The Gospel of Matthew: Reconfigured Torah," *HTS* 61.1&2 (2005):165-190, esp. 174-6; Warren Carter, "Evoking Isaiah: Matthean Soteriology and an Intertextual Reading of Isaiah 7-9 and Matthew 1:23 and 4:15-16," *JBL* 119.3 (2000): 503-20. Cf. also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:29-57 for Matthew's expansive use of the OT (not just from his sources). Cf. also Donald Senior, "The Lure of the Formula Quotations: Re-Assessing Matthew's Use of the Old Testament with the Passion Narratives as a Test Case," in *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (ed. Christopher M. Tuckett; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997).

¹¹ Cf. Ulrich Luz, "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," *HTR* 97.2 [2004]: 128-30.

¹² Cf. Graham Stanton, "Matthew," in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 205-219; Richard Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel* (SNTSMS 123; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 17.

¹³ See the helpful chart in Brandon D. Crowe, *The Obedient Son: Deuteronomy and Christology in the Gospel of Matthew* (BZNW 188; Göttingen: Walter de Gruyter, 2012). Citations: Isa (15), Pss (14), Deut (10), Exod (9); Gen (4); Lev (5); Num (1). Allusions: Isa (66), Psa (54), Deut (43), Exod (20); Gen (23); Lev (14); Num (10). Where to draw the line in terms of the "most" influential OT texts is, of course, somewhat subjective. However, one can see in the numbers above that explicit citations begin to drop precipitously once we get to Genesis, and it seems reasonable to assume that the narrative as a whole is probably less shaped by the less cited books than by those more frequently cited. Despite the low number of direct citations, I have included Genesis, Leviticus, and Numbers because of (1) the relatively high number of allusions, (2) the (possible) Pentateuchal structure of the entire narrative, and (3) the key role that the "stories" of Israel's early history play for Matthew's narrative and Israel's identity as a whole (cf. Luz, "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," esp. 129). Crowe does not include Daniel in his count, but for Daniel's influence on Matthew, cf. Jonathan T. Pennington, "Refractions of Daniel in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality* (LNTS 391; New York: T&T Clark), 65-86.

While primarily focusing on those texts, I will also comment on other relevant OT texts briefly in various notes. In the survey below, we will proceed by noting the most common use of προσκυνέω in a given book, and then discuss in more detail those instances that diverge from its common use.

II.1 προσκυνέω in the OT

Isaiah

Turning to Isaiah, we must keep in mind not only Matthew's frequent use of this prophetic book, but also the widespread influence it had on early Judaism.¹⁴ Its way of speaking about proper worship formed an important part of ancient Jewish and Christian sensitivities to such issues. The majority (9) of the twelve occurrences of προσκυνέω in the LXX of Isaiah refer either to Israel's proper worship of YHWH or to their idolatrous practices that betray their duty to worship YHWH alone. These uses of προσκυνέω are spread throughout the book, and they find special concentration in Second Isaiah's intense focus on the uniqueness of YHWH (e.g. 44:15, 17, 19; 46:6). Representative of Isaiah's use are:

Isa 44:15, 17: . . . they make for themselves gods and worship them (προσκυνοῦσιν αὐτοῦς/וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ) . . . and the rest [of the wood] he makes into a carved god and worships (προσκυνεῖ αὐτῷ/וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה) it and prays [to it] . . .¹⁵

¹⁴ Cf. Richard Beaton, "Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel," in *Isaiah in the New Testament* (eds. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken; New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 63.

¹⁵ Since it is possible Matthew drew on a Hebrew or Aramaic version of the OT, it is worth including the MT text (cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:33; Robert H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel: With Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* [NovTSup 18; Leiden: Brill, 1967]). Most often, the word translated with προσκυνέω both in Isaiah and elsewhere in the OT is the hishtaphel of חזה. Four times in Isaiah the word סגר is translated with προσκυνέω, and it always connotes idolatrous worship (44:15, 17, 19; 46:6). Isaiah is the only place סגר occurs in the MT.

Isa 66:23: And so it shall be from month to month and sabbath to sabbath; all flesh will come before me to worship (προσκυνῆσαι/להשתחוות) in Jerusalem, says the Lord.

Interestingly, one of the only three uses of προσκυνέω not explicitly linked to cultic “worship” (whether idolatrous or not) is in 49:7, where YHWH speaks of the day when kings shall behold his servant and προσκυνήσουσιν αὐτῷ.¹⁶ This passage both echoes the first so-called servant song (42:1-4) as well as portends the following servant songs, where the servant’s career follows a cycle of rejection and subsequent exaltation by YHWH (49:7; 50:5-9; 52:12-53:13). The servant is so closely aligned with YHWH that he not only receives προσκύνησις from the nations in 49:7, but in the climactic servant song, he is said to be “exalted and lifted up” (52:13 MT).¹⁷ This combination of “exalted and lifted up” (ירום ונשא) is the same terminology used for YHWH in Isaiah’s vision of the heavenly throne room (6:1),¹⁸ and it is later used as a personal identifier for him (57:15).¹⁹ The servant, then, appears to be exalted to God’s presence, maybe even to the divine throne, because of his faithfulness to his calling (cf. 49:4; 50:1-6, 9-10; 53:11-12).²⁰ Along with noting the servant’s exaltation, however, we should also note that the text seems to qualify the προσκύνησις the servant receives in 49:7 by emphasizing that it is ἔνεκεν κυρίου (למען יהוה). It is YHWH who has chosen the one the nations despised (vv

¹⁶ וקמו שרים וישתחוו למען יהוה. In the MT it is less clear that the action of חוה is rendered to the servant, since it is used intransitively, but the LXX makes it explicit.

¹⁷ The LXX is slightly different: ἰδοὺ συνήσεται ὁ παῖς μου καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα.

¹⁸ ואראה את־אדני יושב על־כסא רם ונשא

¹⁹ כי כה אמר רם ונשא

²⁰ Cf. Klaus Baltzar, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40-55* (Hermeneia; trans. Margaret Kohl; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 395-6, 395 n. 49; Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 49-51.

7-8) and who has rescued his people (vv. 9-13); later, after the servant's exaltation, it is YHWH who is Israel's maker and redeemer (54:5).

Similarly, 49:22-23 is composed around the theme of YHWH's dramatic reversal of the exiles' fortunes. They will be brought home to Jerusalem with great pomp by their enemies, a return which climaxes with those enemies rendering προσκύνησις to Israel.²¹ This reversal of Israel's position – from servitude to receiving the obeisance of the nations – is YHWH's way of showing his people the surety of his promise (vv. 23, 26). The προσκύνησις Israel receives falls more under the image of political homage/obeisance than “worship,” since the focus remains on how YHWH himself has accomplished this seemingly impossible deed and through it made his universal Lordship known to “all flesh” (vv. 24-26).²²

In a similar pattern, the only other text to use the language of προσκύνησις for a non-“divine” figure is 45:14. The recipient of προσκύνησις here is unclear, with both Cyrus²³ or the exiles²⁴ as possible referents for the second person singular, though the latter seems more likely.²⁵ In either case, the one who receives προσκύνησις receives it, ὅτι ἐν σοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐστὶν καὶ ἐροῦσιν οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν σοῦ.²⁶ Further, Isaiah 45 as a whole is one of the most strongly “monotheistic” passages in Old Testament, with every

²¹ Cf. Baltzar, *Deutero-Isaiah*, 329-30. In the MT (and LXX) of this text, it is clear (unlike the MT of 49:7) that the προσκύνησις is rendered to Israel.

²² Isa. 60:14 also shows the nations bowing before Israel (והשתחוּ), though the LXX does not use προσκυνέω. Our comments on 49:22-23 apply similarly to this text.

²³ Baltzar, *Deutero-Isaiah*, 241.

²⁴ Brevard Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 354.

²⁵ With most commentators.

²⁶ אך בך אל ואין עוד אפס אלהים

knee bowing to YHWH alone (45:23).²⁷ Accordingly, Isaiah again takes pains to qualify the προσκύνησις Israel (?) receives and focuses the reader's attention on YHWH's greatness. Nonetheless, the proper worship of YHWH issues in a corresponding obeisance to his people by the nations.

Thus, in two of these three instances where Isaiah uses προσκυνέω in a positive manner for a figure other YHWH, the text is careful to qualify why Israel/the servant receive such honors – it is, ὅτι ἐν σοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐστὶν καὶ ἐροῦσιν οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν σοῦ (45:14; cf. 49:2, 26). Both of these texts above strongly emphasize that “approved” προσκύνησις rendered to someone other than YHWH is of a political nature and in fact finds its cause and telos in him. Neither Israel, nor Cyrus/Israel (?) receive προσκύνησις on account of their intrinsic majesty, but because YHWH has exalted them by his own power, and subsequently the glory redounds to him. The situation with the servant is both similar and different. The text certainly emphasizes that it is YHWH who exalts him and who causes the nations to render him προσκύνησις, but the servant passages also emphasize that his exaltation is due to his faithful obedience.

Turning to Isaiah's relation to Matthew, it will be useful to keep the texts we have surveyed in mind, because (1) most of Isaiah's uses of προσκυνέω are for censuring idolatrous worship, (2) Isaiah does show proper προσκύνησις offered to figures other than YHWH, (3) Matthew is indebted to Isaiah on a large scale, (4) he explicitly narrates Jesus' identity in light of Isaiah's servant figure (e.g., 12:18-21), and (5) Isaiah (esp. Second Isaiah) saw such widespread influence on the Judaism and Christianity

²⁷ Baltzar (*Deutero-Isaiah*, 241) interestingly suggests that the προσκύνησις that Cyrus (?) receives in 45:14 is counteracted by the worship YHWH receives in 45:23. That is, 45:13 represents a “blasphemous” worship that is replaced by proper worship with the recognition of YHWH's rulership.

contemporaneous with Matthew. Again, however, our argument (at least at this point), is not that Matthew's Gospel is drawing on any particular passage of Isaiah, but rather that Isaiah has broadly shaped Matthew's portrait of Jesus,²⁸ and thus it serves as a particularly relevant backdrop for reading the narrative well. It will be worth considering below how Matthew has creatively reappropriated Isaiah's servant tradition by comparing and contrasting his use of προσκυνέω with that of Isaiah.²⁹

The Psalms

Similar to Isaiah, the Psalms, upon which Matthew's narrative also draws in a wide-ranging manner, reserve their use of προσκυνέω most frequently (16 of 18x) either for the worship Israel owes to YHWH or for false worship of foreign gods/idols.³⁰

Representative of those two motifs are:

Ps 21:28 (LXX): All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord and all the peoples of the nations shall worship before you (καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν/וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶיּוּ עֲבָדֶיךָ לְפָנֶיךָ).

Ps 80:10 (LXX): There shall be no new god among you; neither shall you worship a foreign god (οὐδὲ προσκυνήσεις/הִתַּחֲוִיתָ אֱלֹהֵי אֲחֵרִים).

Interestingly, of the only two instances where the term is not explicitly connected with cultic worship (Pss 45 and 72), we find some of the loftiest portraits of Israel's king in the entire Psalter. In 44:13 (LXX; 45:11 MT) the psalmist declares, προσκυνήσουσιν

²⁸ Besides what I have briefly noted, the importance of Isaiah's servant figure for Matthew is well-documented (though not uncontested; cf., e.g., Leroy Huizenga, *The New Isaac*, 189-208). See, e.g., Beaton, *Isaiah's Christ in Matthew's Gospel*; idem, "Isaiah in Matthew's Gospel"; and David Hill, "Son and Servant: An Essay on Matthean Christology," *JSNT* 6 (1980): 2-16.

²⁹ Before moving on to the Psalms, it is worth mentioning another prophet that surely influenced Matthew, though maybe somewhat less than Isaiah, that is, Jeremiah (cf. Michael Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew's Gospel: The Rejected Prophet Motif in Matthean Redaction* [JSNTSup 68; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993]). In Jeremiah, προσκυνέω occurs seven times (always translating חָהָה). Six refer to false worship (1:16; 8:2; 13:10; 16:11; 22:9; 25:6), and one refers to Israel's worship of YHWH in the Temple (33:2).

³⁰ Thirteen are for the worship due to Israel's κύριος; three for idolatrous worship.

αὐτῷ θυγατέρες Τύρου ἐν δώροις,³¹ after the striking stanza in which the king is (probably) addressed as “God” (ὁ θεός; אלהים) whose throne will last εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (44:7; כסאך אלהים עולם).³² So strong is the royal language of Psalm 45 that the author of Hebrews uses it as part of his argument for the Son’s superiority over the angels (Heb 1:8-9).³³ Along with the christological interpretation of Hebrews, probably 4Q252, the Targum on the Psalm (45:3), and Rabbi Eliezer (*b. Šabb.* 63a) interpret Psalm 45 messianically.³⁴

Likewise, at the climax of Book 2 of the Psalms, Psalm 71:11 LXX (72:11 MT) declares of the Davidic king, καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν αὐτῷ πάντες οἱ βασιλεῖς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη δουλεύουσιν αὐτῷ.³⁵ Another “royal” Psalm (like Ps 44/45), this intercessory prayer for “Solomon” envisions a rule for him that extends to the ends of the earth (v. 8), and it interprets his reign as the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham to bless all nations (v.17). Part of that worldwide dominion is the subjugation of the nations in which the king not only receives their προσκύνησις, but also is “served” by the Gentiles. This combination of “obedience/worship and serve” (προσκυνέω/ἵκη and δουλεύω/עבד) is similar to the language used frequently in Deuteronomy of the exclusive devotion Israel owes to YHWH (7x in Deut [with λατρεύω]; also, Jer. 16:11).

³¹ The MT reads slightly differently. Here, the bride (“daughter”) to be is “invited” to bow down before her “Lord” (the king): כִּי־הוּא אֲדִנִּיךָ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִי־לוֹ.

³² On this translation, see Murray J. Harris, “The Translation of Elohim in Psalm 45:7-8,” *TynBul* 35 (1984): 65-89; Joachim Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (WUNT 2/76; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1995), 80-81.

³³ For a helpful exposition of this passage in Hebrews, see Murray J. Harris, “The Translation and Significance of ho theos in Hebrews 1:8-9,” *TynBul* 36 (1985): 129-62; also, cf. Richard Bauckham, “Monotheism and Christology in Hebrews 1,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 167-85.

³⁴ Cf. George Guthrie, “Hebrews,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (eds. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007); cf. also Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, 79.

³⁵ MT וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוִי־לוֹ כָּל־מַלְכִּים כָּל־גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ :

Not unlike Isaiah, however, the Psalm may mitigate what might be perceived as praise for the king that transgresses the worship due to YHWH. First, although the Psalm parallels the language of “worship and serve” used in Deuteronomy for YHWH, there עבד is consistently translated with λατρεύω, which has specifically “religious” connotations.³⁶ By avoiding the double προσκυνέω and λατρεύω, the translator may avoid implying that the προσκύνησις the king receives is in fact “worship.” Avoiding the more explicitly cultic overtones of λατρεύω, he may thereby circumscribe an interpretation that would suggest the king will receive the “service” that was due to YHWH, i.e., sacrifice.³⁷ Such a conclusion is supported by other factors in the Psalm as well. Qualifying the προσκύνησις the king receives are both the reason the king receives προσκύνησις and also the manner in which the Psalm ends. The king is said to receive obeisance from the nations because of his justice and care for the poor.³⁸ In the end, it is “the God of Israel” who is blessed above all, because he “alone” does wonders (v.18: ὁ ποιῶν θαυμάσια μόνος).³⁹ Further, it is his glory that fills the earth, and his name that is blessed forever (vv. 18-19).⁴⁰ By ending in this manner, the psalmist frames the extremely exalted position of Israel’s king within the context of the dominion and glory of Israel’s κύριος ὁ θεός.⁴¹

³⁶ Cf. H. Strathmann, “λατρεύω,” *TDNT* IV:60.

³⁷ Though note that in Jer. 16:11, which is clearly cultic, עבד is translated with δουλεύω, and προσκυνέω can certainly stand alone as “worship” given the proper context (as seen above in, e.g., Isaiah and the Psalms).

³⁸ Note the causal ὅτι of 71:12 that gives the reason for the kings’ obeisance in 71:11.

³⁹ עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדֹךָ; In fact, the whole “chain of petitions and requests [to/for the king]...are tied back...to v.1” (Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalms 2: 51-100* [Hermeneia; trans. Linda M. Maloney; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005], 206).

⁴⁰ Though the LXX further exalts the eschatological king by adding that his name, too, is “blessed” forever (71.17); cf. Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, 94.

⁴¹ “There are two blessings that make explicit the theocentricity that is implicit in Psalm 72 and so subordinate the (messianic) royal-theological perspective to the (theocratic-) theocentric perspective” (Hossfeld, *Psalms* 2, 218).

Of further importance for our study is Psalm 71/2's influence on later Jewish literature. It was often read messianically, as seen in its canonical setting,⁴² its translation in the Septuagint,⁴³ the Psalms of Solomon's idealized portrait of the Messiah (chpts. 17 & 18),⁴⁴ second Isaiah's vision of Israel's/the servant's future rule,⁴⁵ and the Targums' and rabbis' consistently messianic interpretation of the Psalm.⁴⁶ Though Ps 71 is not directly cited in the NT, it probably influenced a number of NT texts,⁴⁷ and it is central to a long ecclesiastical tradition (e.g., the festival of the Epiphany, which reads Ps 71 messianically).⁴⁸

In sum, it goes without saying that the Psalms constitute an integral part of Matthew's cultural/theological encyclopedia. We should therefore attend closely to how his christological use of προσκυνέω reflects engagement with the Psalm's directing of προσκύνησις toward Israel's one God as well as its vision of προσκύνησις given to the eschatological king. As we will see, Matthew incorporates both elements in his portrayal

⁴²Hossfeld, *Psalms* 2, 219; B. S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 515-17.

⁴³ E.g., as mentioned above, the "blessing" of the king's name forever (v. 17) and the strengthened link to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant (v. 17). Cf. Hossfeld, *Psalms* 2, 219; Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter*, 93-6.

⁴⁴ Cp., e.g., *Pss. Sol.* 17:22-23/Ps 71:1-2; *Pss. Sol.* 17:26/Ps 71:4, 12; *Pss. Sol.* 17:30-31/Ps 71:8-11; *Pss. Sol.* 17:35, 37/Ps 71:5, 17. One might even characterize *Pss. Sol.* 17 as something of a midrash on Isa 11:1-5 and Ps 71. Cf. also Craig C. Broyles, "The Redeeming King: Psalm 72's Contribution to the Messianic Ideal," in *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (eds. Craig A. Evans and Peter W. Flint; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997); Kenneth Atkinson, *An Intertextual Study of the Psalms of Solomon* (SBEC 49; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 347-357.

⁴⁵ Cf. Ronald E. Clements, "Psalm 72 and Isaiah 40-66: A Study in Tradition," *PRSt* 28.4 (2001): 335.

⁴⁶ Cf. Broyles, "The Redeeming King," 33.

⁴⁷ We will discuss below its influence on Matt 2:11; cf. Broyles ("The Redeeming King," 30-32) for other NT texts influenced by Ps 71.

⁴⁸ For a fascinating and instructive discussion of the importance of the visit of the magi (Epiphany) in ancient Christian liturgy, see Otto G. von Simson's discussion of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo (*Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976 (orig. 1948)], 69-110).

of the filial κύριος (see especially the discussion of Matt 2:1-11, Matt 15:21-28, and Matt 21:1-17 below).⁴⁹

Deuteronomy

That Deuteronomy significantly influenced the Gospel of Matthew and ancient Judaism contemporaneous with Matthew is widely recognized.⁵⁰ Wright even says that Matthew “had in mind” the entire covenantal structure of Deuteronomy, and particularly the closing chapters of Deuteronomy, when he composed his Gospel.⁵¹ While this judgment may go a bit too far, or at least would be difficult to prove, Wright has picked

⁴⁹ Related to the use of προσκυνέω in Ps 71 is its frequent use for the king in 1-2 Kingdoms. It seems to be used somewhat more freely in these texts, however, in that figures other than Israel’s κύριος and the king are the objects of προσκυνέω (e.g., 1 Kgdms 28:14; 2 Kgdms 18:21; cf. 3 Kgdms 2:13 [LXX only]; 4 Kgdms 2:15). There is, however, a fascinating shift in the use of προσκυνέω between 1-2 Kgdms and 3-4 Kgdms. In 1-2 Kgdms, it is used frequently and freely of Saul and David. In 3-4 Kgdms, however, all of its royal uses occur only in chapter 1 (3x for David – 1:16; 1:23; 1:31 – and 1x for Solomon, 1:53). Subsequent to Solomon’s rise, which corresponds to Israel’s/Judah’s progressive descent into idolatry, προσκυνέω is never again used of Solomon or any of Israel’s or Judah’s kings, and is overwhelmingly used to connote (mostly idolatrous) “worship” (3 Kgdms 9:6, 9; 16:31; 19:18; 22:53; 2 Kgdms 5:18; 17:16, 35, 36; 18:22; 19:37; 21:3; 21:21). After Solomon’s initial rise to power in 3 Kgdms 1-2, Elisha is the only human object of προσκυνέω (2x - 4 Kgdms 2:15; 4:37). In the latter two instances, Elisha receives προσκύνησις as a result of taking up the mantle of Elijah and demonstrating that the “Lord, the God of Elijah” is with him (2:14), and for raising the Shunamite’s son, which he does after he has “prayed to the Lord” (4:33). Our initial, though admittedly speculative, supposition is that this shift in the use of προσκυνέω reflects 3-4 Kgdms (exilic) concern to demonstrate the reason for Israel’s exile – their idolatry – and thus a concomitant concern to preserve actions such as προσκύνησις for κύριος ὁ θεός. Such an interpretation is probably confirmed by the sparse use of προσκυνέω in 1-2 Supplements (Chronicles) for anything but “worship” (whether idolatrous or not). Even though Chronicles surely draws on 1-4 Kgdms, only three times does a human figure receive προσκύνησις (as opposed to 16x in 1-2 Kgdms). In the two instances in 1 Chr the context makes it clear that David is not receiving the προσκύνησις due to the Lord God (cf. 21:22-24; 29:20-22; while 29:20 shows the congregation rendering προσκύνησις to Israel’s κύριος and to king David simultaneously, in vv. 1-20 David himself emphatically focuses on the unique power and glory of Israel’s God). In 2 Chr it is used only once for a human figure, and there it appears to be negative, since the Judahite officials “bow” before the king, and the narrator immediately comments that “they abandoned the house of the Lord” (24:17-18). This trend would seem to lend support to the notion that προσκυνέω was less frequently used in a positive manner for human figures in post-exilic Judaism unless the context made it clear that idolatrous worship was not intended (cf. the further discussion below regarding the “refusal tradition”).

⁵⁰ See the helpful survey in Crowe, *The Obedient Son*, chapters 2 and 5; also, Maarten J. J. Menken, “Deuteronomy in Matthew’s Gospel,” in *Deuteronomy in the New Testament* (LNTS 358; New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 43.

⁵¹ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*. Vol. 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 388.

up on the deeply formative role Deuteronomy's story and theology has played on the Matthean narrative.

The LXX of Deuteronomy uses προσκυνέω nine times, spread rather evenly throughout the text, and always translates the same Hebrew term (Hishtaphel of חוה).⁵² The term always connotes “worship,” either of Israel’s “Lord” or of false gods, which is made clear by context (e.g., the mention of other “gods” or “the Lord”) and by its pairing with “serve,” λατρεύω (עבד). The latter term may add an extra dimension, such as engaging in sacrifice to foreign deities.⁵³ However, since the terms occur frequently together in Deuteronomy and throughout Jewish literature, and because either term can stand alone as a reference to “worship” (e.g., Deut 4:28; 6:13; 26:10, 32:43), the use of προσκυνέω and λατρεύω as a pair is probably an example of hendiadys. Most often (7 of 9x) προσκυνέω is used to warn Israel against “worshipping” false gods, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου θεὸς ζηλωτῆς (5:9).⁵⁴ Further, the penalty for perpetrating false worship is death, because it brings “evil in your midst” (17:3-7).

Although προσκυνέω tends to be used in negative contexts in Deuteronomy (forbidding false worship), the term can also be used positively for worshipping Israel’s God (26:10; 32:43 LXX). When we come to Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω it will be instructive to consider the strong prohibitions issued throughout Deuteronomy against worshipping any being other than YHWH, since Deuteronomy pervasively influences Matthew’s Gospel.

⁵² The ninth and final use of προσκυνέω in 32:43 LXX is an expansion of the MT, especially with respect to the opening statement: εὐφράνθητε οὐρανοὶ ἅμα αὐτῷ καὶ προσκυνήσατωσαν αὐτῷ πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ.

⁵³ Strathmann, “λατρεύω,” *TDNT*, IV: 60.

⁵⁴ כִּי אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵל קָנָא

We can briefly canvas the use of προσκυνέω in the rest of the Pentateuch. In Exodus, προσκυνέω (חָנָה) is used eleven times, ten of which clearly refer to “worship” either of YHWH or of false gods.⁵⁵ The one time it is used in a more mundane context (18:7), it is clear that Moses intends respect, and that no “worship” is implied, since Moses and Jethro subsequently embrace one another and discuss “all that the Lord had done” (18:8).

Leviticus and Numbers use προσκυνέω infrequently (1x and 2x respectively). Leviticus clearly uses it for idolatrous worship (26:1). In Numbers 25:2 προσκυνέω refers to idolatrous worship, while in 22:31 its meaning is less clear. There, when God opens Balaam’s eyes and he sees the angel of the Lord standing with drawn sword the text reads, κύψας προσεκύνησεν τῷ προσώπῳ αὐτοῦ.⁵⁶ Whether his gesture here means “worship” is ambiguous, because the appearance of the angel of the Lord in Numbers is limited to this particular event. Considering, however, that there was some sort (!) of equation between Israel’s God and the angel of the Lord in the Pentateuchal and Judges traditions, προσκυνέω here probably should be rendered as “worship.”⁵⁷

Finally, Genesis appears to have the most flexible use of προσκυνέω. It is used in a wide variety of contexts, from worshipping God (e.g., 18:2; 22:5), to bowing before angels (e.g., 19:1), to paying homage to other humans (e.g., 23:7). It is frequently used

⁵⁵ Exod 11:8 is somewhat ambiguous as to the object of προσκύνησις – God or Moses – but probably God is the object (cf. Thomas B. Dozeman, *Commentary on Exodus* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2009], 258; for a differing view, see Cornelius Houtman, *Exodus* [3 vols; Kampen: Kok Publishing House, 1996], 2:135).

⁵⁶ ויקד וישתחו לאפיו

⁵⁷ On the angel of the Lord and his identification with YHWH, see Stephen L. White, “Angel of the Lord: Messenger or Euphemism,” *TynBul* 50.2 (1999): 299-305.

throughout the Joseph cycle, since προσκυνέω (חָוָה) is the term Joseph uses initially to describe the obeisance he receives in his dream. As a result, the image of Joseph receiving προσκύνησις is reflected frequently in early Jewish literature.⁵⁸ Finally, in Jacob's blessing of his children, he says that Judah's brothers "will bow before him" (προσκυνήσουσίν σοι, 49:8),⁵⁹ clearly referring to the homage his offspring deserve due to their royal position (see vv. 9-12). This passage (49:8-12) is frequently drawn upon in ancient Jewish literature as a reference to the future messiah.⁶⁰

Daniel

Daniel's usage of προσκυνέω can be quickly summarized, since all but one of its 14 uses of the term refers to the proper worship of Israel's God or to idolatrous worship (rendering the Aramaic ܠܗܝܬܐ, as in 4Q246, discussed below).⁶¹ Indeed, in Dan 3, which contains the vast majority of Daniel's uses of προσκυνέω, the word becomes a *Leitwort*.⁶² It is used in the phrase "fall down and worship" (πεσόντες προσκυνήσατε) six times in twelve verses, along with another three uses of προσκυνέω independently.⁶³ All of these

⁵⁸ E.g., Philo, *Somn.* 2:7; *Jos., Ant.* 2:13; *T. Zeb.* 3:6; *Jos. Asen.* 5:10; 22:4. Note also, however, that Joseph and his sons bow before Jacob (προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, Gen. 48:12; in the LXX, it is not as clear that Joseph, too, bows; in the MT, Joseph alone bows before Jacob).

⁵⁹ ܠܗܝܬܐ ܠܝ

⁶⁰ E.g., *Aramaic Levi Document* 11:6; *T. Reu.* 6:12; 2Q252 V, 1-2; *Gen. Rab.* 49:11; *Tg. Onq.* Gen 49:10; *Tg. Neof.* Gen 49:10.

⁶¹ Regarding προσκυνέω, the OG and Theodotion correspond exactly in this section.

⁶² On *Leitwort*, see Robert Alter *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 92-96 and the chapter, "The Techniques of Repetition."

⁶³ The combination of πίπτω and προσκυνέω is rather common in the OT and other Jewish-Greek literature.

refer to the worship Nebuchadnezzar demands for his golden image and the refusal of the three Israelites to render “worship” to anyone but Israel’s God (cf. 3:18).⁶⁴

Since Matthew draws heavily on Daniel for his Son of Man imagery and uses the combination of πίπτω and προσκυνέω for both Israel’s God and Jesus (e.g., 2:11; 4:9; cf. 28:9), it will be important to keep Daniel’s usage in mind. Further, since Daniel could be said to reflect the exilic and post-exilic mindset of at least some Jews regarding what constituted proper worship, Daniel’s usage of προσκυνέω is all the more relevant for understanding Matthew’s cultural encyclopedia.⁶⁵

To summarize the use of προσκυνέω in those OT texts to which Matthew is most clearly indebted, we can see that the vast majority of instances refer to “worship” – either the proper worship of Israel’s Lord or the idolatrous worship of pagan gods/idols, the latter of which is heavily censured, for example, in Isaiah, the Psalms, and Deuteronomy. In Isaiah and the Psalms προσκυνέω can be used positively, though rarely, for a figure other than Israel’s God. Importantly for our study of Matthew, that figure both in Isaiah

⁶⁴ In Dan 2:46 Nebuchadnezzar falls on his face and “worships” (προσεκύνησε τῷ Δανιηλ) Daniel after Daniel interprets his dream. That this is indeed “worship” is strengthened by the fact that Nebuchadnezzar orders that “an offering and fragrant incense” be offered to him. However, it is important to note several movements in the narrative that suggest the narrative itself does not endorse the “worship” of Daniel or of any other figure other than Israel’s God. First, the reader knows that Nebuchadnezzar does not provide a reliable “evaluative point of view,” since he is a pagan king who is ignorant of the one true God of Israel and what he requires, and soon afterwards he would be requiring worship of an idol (chpt 3). Second, Daniel himself blesses God as the giver of his insight and the one who is to be worshiped (2:20-23). Third, after worshipping Daniel Nebuchadnezzar immediately goes on to say that it is Daniel’s God who has provided the interpretation, and he is “God of gods and Lord of kings” (2:47). Fourth, in the narrative that follows, those who do provide a reliable “evaluative point of view” (the three Israelites) unequivocally affirm the worship due to Israel’s God (3:18). Like Isaiah and the Psalms, Daniel asserts YHWH’s unique right to “worship” when the προσκύνησις offered to another figure could be misinterpreted as endorsing “worship” for someone other than YHWH.

⁶⁵ See the brief discussion in George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 17-22.

and the Psalms is God’s chosen agent – the servant (or Israel) and the Davidic king, respectively. We also saw, however, that these few passages probably attempt to curtail the possible misinterpretation of προσκυνέω by (re)focusing the highest praise on God. The προσκύνησις these figures receive does not challenge that which is due to God, but redounds to his own glory, since he is the one who exalts them to such a lofty status. Lastly, we noticed a rather sporadic use of προσκυνέω in Genesis, but like Isaiah and the Psalms, when it is used of a figure other than Israel’s God, it is often applied to royal figures (i.e., Joseph and Judah’s progeny).

II.2 προσκυνέω in Early Jewish Literature

As with the OT, in the so-called apocryphal literature προσκυνέω is most frequently used with reference to “worshiping” Israel’s God or false gods/idols.⁶⁶ Josephus uses προσκυνέω in a variety of ways – political subjugation (*J.W.* 2:366, 380), honor for respected individuals (*J.W.* 4:324), Jewish worship (*J.W.* 2:414; 5:99), and prohibition against idolatry (*Ag. Ap.* 1:239).⁶⁷ While Philo can use the term broadly as well, he also says, “Repudiating all such dishonesty (τερθρείαν) let us not worship those who are brothers and sisters by nature (τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς φύσει μὴ προσκυνῶμεν; *Decal.* 1:64).⁶⁸

⁶⁶ E.g., Judges (A) 2:12; 1 Es 9:47; Jud 6:18; Tob 5:14; 1 Macc 4:55; Sir 50:17, 20 (nominal form); Ep Jer 1:5; Bel 5; 3 Macc 3:7 (nominal form). On προσκυνέω in Judith, see n. 4 above.

⁶⁷ In *Antiquities* Josephus frequently uses προσκυνέω with a human object when paralleling its use in a biblical text.

⁶⁸ In *Contempl.* 1:1-11 Philo laments (not unlike Rom. 1) the foolishness of those who worship (προσκυνοῦσιν, 1:9) created beings, even heavenly bodies/ “demi-gods” (ἡμιθέους, 1:6) over against the “living God” (τοῦ ὄντος, 1:11). Cf. also, e.g., *Gig.* 1:54; *Conf.* 1:49; *Congr.* 1:103; *Mos.* 1:276; *Spec.* 1:15.

In the typically later Pseudepigraphal literature the term is used in various ways, each instance of which would require investigation into its context.⁶⁹ Probably most important for our purposes is the *Similitudes of 1 Enoch* (37-71),⁷⁰ both because of the overlap in themes with Matthew (the Son of Man) and its contemporaneity with Matthew.⁷¹ The enthroned Son of Man/Messiah/Chosen One is twice “worshiped” by the nations in Enoch’s vision of the eschatological judgment (48:5; 62:9; cf. 46:4-6). Because this text deserves extended consideration, we explore it in detail in our treatment of Jewish “agency” language in chapter four.⁷²

Another text, often invoked as evidence of an exalted figure “divinized” and “worshiped,” is the *Exagogue* of Ezekiel the Tragedian. Moses has a dream of sitting on God’s throne and the “stars” falling down at his feet (70-81, though here πίπτω). The subsequent interpretation of the vision by his father-in-law (Raguel), however, strongly suggests that he is not receiving the worship reserved for Israel’s God, but the obeisance due “to a king and a prophet.”⁷³ As Lanfranchi has rightly argued, much scholarly interpretation of this passage that has suggested Moses’ “divinization” has not adequately considered the context of the passage or the genre of Greek tragedy it follows.⁷⁴ He further comments:

⁶⁹ Though it should be noted that προσκυνέω (or a similar action) is used frequently for true or idolatrous “worship” (e.g., *1 En.* 10:21; 57:3 [Ethiopic]; 99:6 [Ethiopic]; *Syb. Or.* 3:29-30; *T. Zeb.* 9:5; *T. Ab.* [A] 20:12-13; *Mart. Isa.* 1:9; *Apoc. Mos.* 7:2).

⁷⁰ While this section of *1 Enoch* is preserved only in Ethiopic, the “worship” of the Son of Man is relevant to our discussion.

⁷¹ Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 75-101.

⁷² See n. 106 there.

⁷³ Bauckham, “The Throne of God,” 166-9.

⁷⁴ Pierluigi Langranchi, *L’Exagoge d’Ezékïel le Tragique: Introduction, text, traduction et commentaire* (SVTP 21; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 192-193.

La sémantique du rêve est révélée sur la base du critère selon lequel le plan vertical de l'intronisation céleste de Moïse est ramené à une dimension horizontale, historique et terrestre. En d'autres termes, la divinization de Moïse est conçue comme une métaphore de sa royauté terrestre, de la même façon que la contemplation de trois parties de l'univers annonce sa connaissance du passé, du présent et de l'avenir.⁷⁵

Moving on to Qumran, the same Hebrew word used in the OT for bowing down/worship/ obeisance (חָוָה) – always translated with προσκυνέω in the LXX – occurs occasionally (20x by my count, occurring in the same form as in the OT [hishtaphel]; a number of them are emendations or occur in very small fragments).⁷⁶ Similar to the OT, in the extant texts it is used for warnings about/prohibitions against idol worship, and in one place, the “house of worship” is, literally, the “house of prostration” (בֵּית הַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת, CD XI, 22).⁷⁷ Interestingly, in the “Blessings” (1QSb), the blessing of the “Prince of the Congregation,” which appears to be something of a midrash on Ps 2, Ps 72, Isa 11:1-5, and Numbers 24:17, the text has been emended to read “be[fore you peoples shall bow down (וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ), and all the na]tions shall serve you” (V, 28).⁷⁸ This emendation would seem correct in light of the immediate context, which echoes Ps 72:11, and the larger context that draws on that same Psalm (e.g., V, 21/Ps 72:12-14). Thus, Ps 72's

⁷⁵ Ibid., 194. Contra, e.g., Kristine J. Ruffatto, who suggests that Moses is made into “God’s counterpart” and “divinized” (“Raguel as Interpreter of Moses’ Throne Vision: The Transcendent Identity of Raguel in the Exagogue of Ezekiel the Tragedian,” *JSP* 17 [2008]: 122-3). Ruffatto neglects to account for the fact that Moses’ enthronement is a *dream*, which is then interpreted in a non-literal fashion. Moses’ awakening and the subsequent interpretation both support a non-literal interpretation of his dream. He awakes “terrified” (presumably because he was sitting on God’s throne), and Raguel reassures him and provides a very “mundane” interpretation. Moses will not actually sit on God’s throne or literally see the whole earth (from God’s unique perspective), but his sitting on the throne and seeing the whole earth correspond, respectively, to his “judg[ing] and lead[ing] mortals [himself]” in a kingly role and “see[ing] things present, past, and future” as a prophet.

⁷⁶ No significant (non-biblical) instances occur in the Greek fragments.

⁷⁷ Cf. also, e.g., 1QpHab XII, 13 (לְעֹבְדֵם וּלְשִׁתְּחַוֹת); 11Q19 (Temple Scroll) II, 11; LI, 21; LII, 3; LV, 17.

⁷⁸ All DSS translations from Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg Jr., and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2005).

eschatological vision of the nations doing obeisance to Israel's king is retained, at least in this document, at Qumran.

Further, drawing on Isa 49:23, 1QM XII, 14 and XIX, 6 (the latter being a repetition of the prayer from XII) envision a day when “their kings might serve you (והשתחוּ לך כול) (ומלכיהם ישרתוך), and those who oppressed you shall bow down to you (מעניך).”⁷⁹ As in Isaiah, however, this “obeisance” from the nations is rooted in YHWH's vindication of his oppressed people, while he remains the focus of Israel's praise as the “holy Sovereign” (קדוש אדירנו) and “King of Glory” (ומלך הכבוד) who will “fill his land with glory” (מלא ארצכה כבוד; XIX, 1-4). Likewise, in the so-called “Son of God” text (4Q246 II, 7 [Aramaic Apocalypse]), upon the vindication of God's people, all the nations “will do obeisance to them” (וכל מדינתא לה יסגדון), though here with סגד, an image consonant with the apocalypse's echoes of the vindication of God's people in Dan 7.⁸⁰ As we have seen before, however, this political homage offered to God's people is not the unique worship due to YHWH, made clear by the texts' consistent focus on the “great God” who “is their helper” (אל רבא באילה) (II, 7), who alone establishes his “eternal dominion” and rule over the earth (שלטנה שלטן עלם, II, 9-10).

II.3 The Refusal Tradition

Another important use of προσκυνέω (or similar gesture) that we find in both early Jewish and early Jewish-Christian literature occurs in what Richard Bauckham and

⁷⁹ Isa 49.3 reads: והיו מלכים אמניך ושרותיהם מיניקתיך אפים ארץ ישתחוּ לך ועפר רגליך ילחכו

⁸⁰ Cf. J. J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), chapter 7.

Loren Stuckenbruck call the “refusal tradition.”⁸¹ This refusal tradition “expressed a religious sentiment commonly held among Jews during the Greco-Roman period”⁸² wherein an angel explicitly rejects the “worship” offered to him/her by a human being, lest the worshipper commit an act that should be reserved for the only one worthy of such worship, Israel’s God.⁸³ Bauckham notes that by the first century “the gesture [προσκύνησις] had become highly suspect to Jews in contexts where the idolatrous worship of a human being or angel might be implied,”⁸⁴ not least because of some monarchs’ claims to divinity.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 120-132; Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 75-103.

⁸² Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 81. While the qualifications for the various first-century “Judaisms” could go on endlessly, a number of scholars rightly identify certain features that broadly marked out “Judaism” in the ancient world, of which worship of the one God was fundamental. John Collins comments: “The most striking thing about the Jewish encounter with Hellenism, both in the Diaspora and in the land of Israel, was the persistence of Jewish separatism in matters of worship and cult” (“Cult and Culture: The Limits of Hellenization in Judea,” in John J. Collins and Gregory E. Sterling, eds., *Hellenism in the Land of Israel* [vol. 13 of *Christianity and Judaism in Antiquity Series*; Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2001], 55); cf. also J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE – 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), esp. 428-434. Ed Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63BCE-66CE* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1992), 195-7; 241-7. Christopher Tuckett makes the incisive observation that “[i]ndeed the very language of ‘Judaisms’ (plural), insofar as it is regarded as meaningful enough to *exclude* some things, implies . . . that there were/are enough common features to identify various phenomena which can still be described by the single generic (albeit plural) terms ‘Judaisms’” (“Matthew: The Social and Historical Context,” in *The Gospel of Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity* [ed. Donald Senior; BETL CCXLIII; Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2011], 104 n.12, *italics original*).

⁸³ Stuckenbruck (*Angel Veneration*, 75) lists the relevant texts: Rev 19:10; 22:8-9; *Apocryphal Gospel of Matthew* 3:3; Tob 12:16-22; *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:11-15; *Asc. Isa.* 7:18-23; 8.1-10, 15; 2 *En.* 1:4-8; 3 *En.* 1:7; Cairo Genizah Hekhalot Fragment “A/2,13-16. He also adds a number of non-angelic encounters that include something like the refusal tradition (cf. 76-77). See also Bauckham’s discussion of the earliest Jewish instance of refusing to prostrate oneself in Esth 3:2, which he interprets “as a monotheistic objection to προσκύνησις in the LXX Additions to Esth 13:12-14” (*Climax of Prophecy*, 123 n.18). Bauckham includes texts in the refusal tradition not mentioned by Stuckenbruck. Even if they do not contain an explicit refusal, Bauckham considers them to reflect similar concerns (*Jos. Asen.* 15:11-12; *Apoc. Paul; Lad. Jac.* 3:3-5; cf. *Climax of Prophecy*, 126-128).

⁸⁴ “The Worship of Jesus in Early Christianity,” in *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies of the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 131; also in the same volume, see “The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus,” 155-61.

⁸⁵ Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 123.

Stuckenbruck and Bauckham agree that this phenomenon amounted to a circulating literary tradition, and probably a widely circulating oral tradition.⁸⁶ Revelation 19:10 serves as a good example from an early Jewish-Christian text. When John falls down in προσκύνησις before the radiant appearance of the angel, the angel responds, ὅρα μή· σύνδουλός σου εἰμι καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου τῶν ἔχόντων τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ· τῷ θεῷ προσκύνησον. A very similar episode occurs in 22:8-9. Further, Acts 10:25-26, though not an angelic encounter, shows Cornelius receiving Peter and offering him προσκύνησις, which Peter then rejects: ὁ δὲ Πέτρος ἤγειρεν αὐτὸν λέγων· ἀνάστηθι· καὶ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπός εἰμι.

What is of further importance regarding this refusal tradition, Stuckenbruck notes, is that it is not so much a safeguard against pagan idolatry, but rather “serves to define the devotion to the one God of Israel more precisely: even allied beings who serve God’s purposes are not to be worshiped.”⁸⁷ Any “veneration” angels do receive is offset “by a deliberate attempt to certify that the proper bounds of monotheistic piety have not been breached.”⁸⁸

In sum, it was not προσκυνέω (or a similar gesture) as such that rendered it suspect in Jewish language. Rather, it was the use of such language in theologically-charged situations that required the accompaniment of other linguistic qualifications in

⁸⁶ Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration*, 81; Bauckham calls it a “traditional motif” (*Climax of Prophecy*, 132).

⁸⁷ *Angel Veneration*, 102; cf. idem, “Worship and Monotheism in the Ascension of Isaiah,” in *The Jewish Roots*, 83.

⁸⁸ Stuckenbruck, “Worship and Monotheism,” 87-89.

order to preserve its “grammaticality” for, broadly speaking, the Jewish way of being in the world.⁸⁹

II.4 προσκυνέω in the NT

By far the most common connotation of προσκυνέω within the NT is that of “worship.” Of the literary evidence we have from the earliest Christian communities (in which Matthew and his audience, broadly speaking, participated), προσκυνέω usually suggests the sort of “cultic” devotion that should be reserved for Israel’s God. A clear example of such usage comes from the parallel accounts in Luke and Matthew, where Satan tempts Jesus saying, σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ, ἔσται σοῦ πάντα (Luke 4:7/Matt 4:9). Jesus responds, κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις (4:8/Matt 4:10).

Excluding the uses in Matthew (since we will attempt to discern how exactly Matthew uses the term), προσκυνέω (and its cognates) occurs forty-seven times (46 verbal; 1 nominal). Of those forty-seven instances, only one clearly refers to anything other than the “worship” usually reserved for God. In Rev 3:9, the “one like the Son of Man” says of the enemies of the faithful in Philadelphia, ἰδοὺ ποιήσω αὐτοὺς [those of the Synagogue of Satan] ἵνα ἤξουσιν καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν ἐνώπιον τῶν ποδῶν σου. This text likely alludes to Isa 49:23 (cf. 60:14), which we examined briefly above.⁹⁰ Both there and here it is clear that the saints are not receiving the worship due to God, but receive the political homage of their enemies as a sign of God’s love for and vindication of his

⁸⁹ Cf. also Stuckenbruck, “‘Angels’ and ‘God’: Exploring the Limits of Early Jewish Monotheism,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 69. A similar phenomenon occurs, Stuckenbruck notes, in texts like Tob 11:14, where angels are included in “praise” offered to God, yet the doxology ultimately focuses on God (cf. also Tob 12:6; also pp. 56-7 of the same article).

⁹⁰ Cf. David E. Aune, *Revelation 1-5* (WBC 52; Dallas: Word Books, 1997), 237.

elect.⁹¹ Further, the use of προσκυνέω here is not supported by other contextual factors that might point to “worship,” such as the heavenly throne room (e.g., 4:10) or the radiant appearance of the one receiving προσκύνῃς (e.g., 19:10).⁹² Finally, as we saw above, when προσκυνέω connotes “worship” in Revelation, the Apocalypse takes measures to ensure that true “worship” is to be offered only to God (and Jesus!).⁹³

The meaning of four other instances, all of which have Jesus as their object, is contested. Many take Heb 1:6 and Rev 5:14 as connoting “worship” parallel to that offered to God (cf. Heb 11:21; Rev 4:10).⁹⁴ Some, however, have taken exception to this interpretation, suggesting that the gesture offered to Jesus is honorific, but not equal to the “worship” God receives in these same texts.⁹⁵ Though there is no space to discuss these texts in detail, the burden of proof is decidedly on those who reject “worship” as the appropriate interpretation, since both Heb 1 and Rev 5 include numerous linguistic and rhetorical elements (other than simply προσκυνέω) that closely identify Jesus with Israel’s God.⁹⁶ The other two instances, Mark 5:6 and 15:19, are less clear.⁹⁷ For our

⁹¹ Cf. Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 230, 238; Hurtado, “The Binitarian Shape,” 189.

⁹² For an opposing interpretation, cf. James McGrath, *The Only True God: Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 50, 75-80. McGrath flattens the difference between the contexts in which προσκυνέω occurs in, e.g., Rev 3:9 and 19:10, and thus he fails to account adequately for the angel’s refusal to receive προσκύνῃς in 19:10.

⁹³ For Jesus as the recipient of “worship” equal to that of God in Revelation, cf. C. Kavin Rowe, “For Future Generations: Worshiping Jesus and the Integration of the Theological Disciplines,” *ProEccl* 17 (2008): 190-97; Richard B. Hays, “Faithful Witness, Alpha and Omega: The Identity of Jesus in the Apocalypse of John,” in *Revelation and the Politics of Apocalyptic Interpretation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 69-83. Also, cf. Bauckham, *Climax of Prophecy*, 118-149.

⁹⁴ For Heb 1:6, see, e.g., Harold J. Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 56-7; Richard Bauckham, “Monotheism and Christology in Hebrews 1,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism*, 179-80. For Rev 5:14, see the previous note, and also, e.g., Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, 326, 366-7.

⁹⁵ For Heb 1:6, see, e.g., North, “Jesus and Worship,” 189; For Revelation, see Collins and Collins, *King and Messiah*, 212.

⁹⁶ For example, both Heb 1 and Rev 5 not only contain numerous elements that identify Jesus with Israel’s God, the “Father,” but also contrast Jesus with the angels precisely by the fact that he receives προσκύνῃς, while they do not. The contrast between Jesus and the angels fails in both cases if the

purposes, it is sufficient to recognize that the term προσκυνέω in the earliest Christian literature we have most often means “worship.”

II.5 προσκυνέω in Early Christian literature

A similar pattern to that of the NT obtains in Christian literature of the second century – προσκυνέω most frequently connotes “worship.”⁹⁸ *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* 17:3 provides a particularly fascinating example of “worship” (προσκύνησις) offered to Jesus as Son of God. Indeed, it shares affinities with the refusal tradition noted above. After Polycarp’s death (17:2), Nicetus, at the behest of the Jews, requests that Polycarp’s body not be handed over to the Christians lest they “abandon the crucified one and begin worshipping [ἄρξωνται σέβεσθαι] this one [Polycarp].” The author then comments on the Jews’ ignorance about Christian worship practices:

...being ignorant that neither are we able to abandon Christ (τὸν Χριστόν) – who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of those being saved and who was blameless on behalf of sinners – nor are we able to worship (σέβεσθαι) any other. For, on the one hand, we worship (προσκυνοῦμεν) this one, since he is the Son of God (υἱὸν ὄντα τοῦ θεοῦ), but on the other hand we love (ἀγαπῶμεν) the martyrs as (ὡς) disciples and imitators of the Lord (τοῦ κυρίου), worthy for their unsurpassed affection for their own king... (my translation)

At least two movements in this passage deserve further comment. First, the language of προσκυνέω and σέβω are used interchangeably and set in contrast to the (non-cultic) love

προσκύνησις he receives is only to be interpreted as the same honor that could be offered to royalty, other human figures, or angels.

⁹⁷ For relevant discussions, see Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation and Commentary* (AB 27; New York: Abingdon Press, 1999) and idem, *Mark 8-16: A New Translation and Commentary* (AB 27A; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

⁹⁸ E.g., *Arist.*, 3:2; Justin, *Dial.* 38:1; 64:1 (both in the mouth of Trypho, speaking of the Jews’ refusal to “worship” Jesus; in 64:1, Trypho seems to use λατρεύω and προσκύνησις as near synonyms); 2 *Clem* 1:6; 3:1; *Diogn.* 2:4, 5; *Mart. Pol.* 12:2; 17:3.

(ἀγαπάω) and honor offered to martyrs.⁹⁹ Not unlike Revelation, the worship of Jesus is *included* in the community's scruples about whom they may legitimately worship.

Second, the logic of worship being offered to Jesus turns on his identity as Son of God.¹⁰⁰

We will see that this finds a striking parallel in Matthew's own theological grammar (chapter 4 below).¹⁰¹

III. Conclusion

The discussion above has by no means been exhaustive. Rather, its purpose has been to situate us within the linguistic milieu in which Matthew participated, and thus to provide instructive points of comparison and contrast for discerning Matthew's particular use of προσκυνέω language.

Although we could make a number of observations, for our purposes we should note how the "refusal tradition" makes explicit a sentiment often implicit in the use of προσκυνέω (or similar) language in the OT, early Judaism and early Christianity. In those few contexts where the προσκύνῃσις offered to a human being might suggest infringement upon the unique worship due to Israel's God (e.g., Ps 71:11; 1 Chr 29:20), other linguistic moves are employed to retain the confession of the uniqueness of Israel's

⁹⁹ See our discussion in chapter 3 of the uniquely Matthean literary structure that sets in counterpoint three subsequent episodes about "worship": the disciples' worship (προσκύνησις) of Jesus (14:33), the scribes' and Pharisees' vain worship (μάτην δὲ σέβονται με; 15:9), and the Canaanite woman's worship (προσκύνησις) of Jesus (15:25).

¹⁰⁰ Taking the participle ὄντα as causal, since it is set in contrast to the martyrs; i.e., we "worship" the Christ because he is (or, "as") Son of God; we "love" (not worship) the martyrs because they are (or, "as") disciples and imitators of ὁ κύριος (Jesus). Note further, the only other use of προσκυνέω in *Mart. Pol.* is with reference to "worshipping" pagan gods (12:2).

¹⁰¹ I have not discussed the use of προσκυνέω in Greco-Roman literature primarily because the Gospel narrative itself is most obviously oriented toward Jewish/Jewish-Christian concerns, at least regarding what constitutes proper religious praxis (see n. 37 in the introduction). Thus, a lengthy discussion of how προσκύνῃσις was offered to the gods or Caesar would seem rather superfluous (i.e., I take it as obvious that Matthew's Gospel assumes any such "worship" would be blasphemous). Broadly, προσκυνέω was used primarily for the "worship" offered to gods and emperors in the G-R world. On the use of προσκυνέω in Greco-Roman literature, see Horst, *Proskynein*, 14-32, 44-51, 74-111.

God. When we come to Matthew's Gospel, we will not only see that the narrative employs nothing like the refusal tradition in its christological appropriation of προσκυνέω, but also that it pressures the reader to perceive a unity in the προσκύνησις offered to Father and Son.

CHAPTER 2

Ungrammaticalities: προσκύνησις for the King and for the Lord God

I. Introduction

Having explored Matthew's cultural encyclopedia, we are in a better position to examine the Gospel's use of προσκυνέω. In the last chapter we suggested that the encyclopedia helps situate us to read/hear the word προσκυνέω with at least some sensitivity to how Matthew's audience may have read/heard it. At the same time, it is ultimately the narrative itself that creates a "symbolic world" into which the reader must enter. While the reader brings a host of information to the text that is indispensable for reading it well, the symbolic world of the narrative then gives more particular and specific shape to words, phrases, concepts, practices, etc. That is, the narrative "controls" the way the reader sees the world so that the reader will "appropriate and actualize" the story in a certain way. This "shaping" effected by the narrative means that the Gospel is "in some way treated as a self-contained and 'closed' narrative world; that is, it is conceptualized as a complex structural entity in which partial meanings are dependent upon their relationship to the whole" (see the fuller discussion in the Introduction).¹ It is only through the whole that we understand the parts, and vice versa. Having a grasp of the uses of προσκυνέω in Matthew's particular cultural location we now need to hear how Matthew takes over the language of προσκυνέω and shapes it for his story of the Father and the Son.²

¹ Cf. David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 33.

² See the "Grammar" discussion in the Introduction; also James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 109.

As we noted in the Introduction, when it comes to asking whether Jesus is “God” or “divine” in Matthew’s Gospel, there is often little attention given to how Matthew’s Gospel itself articulates the identity of God. That is, if we are going to ask about the identity of Jesus in the first Gospel vis-à-vis Israel’s God, we have to know how exactly the narrative identifies who Israel’s God is. Particularly relevant to that question is Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 2:1-12 and 4:8-10. While 4:8-10 expresses Israel’s basic confession of faith – only κύριος ὁ θεός receives προσκύνησις – 2:1-12 seems to stand in contradiction to that affirmation, structured as it is on the thrice-repeated offer of προσκύνησις to the infant Jesus. In this chapter we will explore both of these passages in detail, consider the “ungrammaticality” created through their literary interaction, and explore initially how the broader narrative creates an identity between Father and Son through their mutual reception of “worship.”

II. Matt 2:1-12: The Worshiping Magi

Matthew’s first uses of προσκυνέω occur in the visit of the magi, where he employs the term three times in this short narrative. Since there are an unwieldy number of issues in this passage that could sidetrack our discussion, we will focus our main points on the way Matthew has woven the προσκυνέω-motif into the heart of the story.

Though commentators have often highlighted the self-contained and independent nature of this pericope,³ it is nonetheless intricately connected to the preceding material

³ E.g., Hans Klein, “Die Christologie in der Kindheitsgeschichte des Matthäus am Beispiel von Mt 1,18-25,” in *Testimony and Interpretation: Early Christology and Its Judeo-Hellenistic Milieu: Studies in Honour of Peter Pokorný* (eds. Jiří Mrázek and Jan Roskovec; London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 160; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 75.

through the themes of kingship (2:2, 6/1:16-17), the Father's/Jesus' people (2:6, 1:21), the fulfillment of prophecy (2:5-6/1:23), God's providential intervention (2:3, 10, 12/1:20-22), Gentile inclusion (2:1/1:3, 5, 6),⁴ and a number of linguistic parallels.⁵ The visit of the magi serves to move the narrative forward by telling, logically, of that which follows his miraculous conception – his birth and the first public response to Jesus' presence – as well as foreshadowing a number of important themes in Matthew, not least Jesus' rejection by his people.⁶

Kingship also comes to the fore in this passage as Jesus – though only an infant – and Herod are presented in locked competition for true kingship over Israel.⁷ Three times in the first three verses the term βασιλεύς is repeated – “king Herod,” “king of the Jews” (Jesus), “king Herod” (vv. 1-3). Two more times similar terms occur (vv. 6, 9). Quite obviously, there can only be one true king, and once again Matthew foreshadows themes to come (e.g., 27:11, 29, 47).⁸

Further, as Krister Stendahl noted many years ago, whereas chapter 1 serves to identify “who” Jesus is as Messiah and savior, chapter 2 validates his identity

⁴ On this reading of the genealogy, see Jason Hood, *The Messiah, his Brothers, and the Nations: Matthew 1.1-17* (LNTS 441; London: T&T Clark, 2011) along with many commentators. John Calvin recognized Matthew's inclusion of the magi as “the first-fruits of the nations,” *A Harmony of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance; trans. A. W. Morrison and T. H. L. Parker; 3 vols; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 65.

⁵ Note the many verbal resonances that link the two sections: Matt 1.18/2.1 (Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γένεσις / Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος); 1:16/2:4 (ἐξ ἧς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός / ποῦ ὁ χριστός γεννᾶται); 1:21, 23, 25 / 2:2 (τέξεται δὲ υἱόν 3x / ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων).

⁶ See Joachim Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (2 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 1:38; Hubert Frankemölle, *Matthäus Kommentar* (2 vols; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994), 1:165.

⁷ Noted as long ago as Ephraem Syrus (Hymn 12 in *Nineteen Hymns on the Nativity of Christ in the Flesh* [NPNF 13:456]).

⁸ Cf. Jean Miler, *Les Citations D'Accomplissement Dans L'Évangile de Matthieu: Quand Dieu se rend present en toute humanité* (Roma: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1999), 39.

geographically, demonstrating his Davidic roots in Bethlehem (2:1, 5, 6, 8).⁹ Thus, the magi are guided providentially to Jerusalem, and then to the city of David, in search of “the king of the Jews.”

When the magi come from the east, they enter Jerusalem asking:

ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; εἶδομεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἄστέρα ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἤλθομεν προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ (2:2)

A few verses later, Herod expresses a similar sentiment (transparently false to the reader):

πορευθέντες ἐξετάσατε ἀκριβῶς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου· ἐπὰν δὲ εὑρητε, ἀπαγγείλατέ μοι, ὅπως καγὼ ἐλθὼν προσκυνήσω αὐτῷ (2:8)

The narrative climaxes and concludes quickly once the magi find their original goal fulfilled:

καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πесόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνοίξαντες τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῶν προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα, χρυσὸν καὶ λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν . . . ἀνεχώρησαν εἰς τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν (2:11-12)

As can be seen from the verses above, the thrice-repeated phrasing ἔρχομαι + προσκυνέω is an important structuring element in the passage, occurring at the beginning, middle, and end of the story. In the beginning, the completely unexpected appearance of the magi serves to confirm what the reader has just heard about Jesus as son of David/Christ, savior, and Emmanuel from chapter 1 – he is rightly declared by the magi as “king of the Jews” (2:2). Still an infant unknown to the broader world, providentially guided pagans

⁹ Krister Stendahl, “Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Mt 1-2,” in *Judentum – Urchristentum – Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (ed. Walther Eltester; BZNW 26; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1964). Though, as Gnllka and Miler rightly argue, a number of other important Matthean themes are at work here as well, e.g., the “preannouncement” of the nations’ inclusion in God’s people, Jesus’ identity as King of the Jews, etc.; cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:42; Miler, *Les Citations D’Accomplissement*, 38, 44.

“come” with the explicit purpose of rendering him προσκύνῃς.¹⁰ Their appearance extends the narrative’s focus on the miraculous nature of the child’s conception, furthering the double themes of the Father’s providential hand in the Son’s birth/infancy and the wonder of his identity – he will save his people, he is Emmanuel, and now receives the προσκύνῃς of the nations.

As the story progresses the tension rises with Herod’s/Jerusalem’s fear (2:3) and his subsequent claim to wish to render Jesus προσκύνῃς. His mimicking of the magi’s language (ἔρχομαι + προσκυνέω in 2:8) serves to highlight his cunning and deceit. Although the reader does not yet know Herod’s full intent (2:13-18), the passage clearly foreshadows his sinister intentions both with its presentation of Jesus as a competing king – the news of whom evokes fear (2:3) – and also with Herod’s clandestine action (2:7).¹¹ Unbelieving and conniving Herod (and Jerusalem, cf. 2:3) is a foil to the rejoicing and obedient pagans (2:10) as well as to Jesus, the true king, who will be delivered by his Father (2:12-14).¹²

The story then progresses toward its climax as the magi depart from Jerusalem. Surprisingly, the star leads them again (2:9), even for this short journey to Bethlehem,

¹⁰ It is not yet clear how we should take this word (as “worship” or “obeisance” to royalty). On the story level, pagans from the “east” probably would not have made as much distinction as Jews between the two options (cf. Craig S Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2009], 105; also W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988-97), *Matthew*, 1:248). For a further discussion, see below.

¹¹ Cf. Elian Cuvillier, “La Visite des Mages dans l’Évangile de Matthieu (Matthieu 2, 1-12),” *Foi et vie* (1999): 82.

¹² Cf. Hubert Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi: Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangeliums nach Matthäus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973), 166. As many have noted, this passage serves to portend Jesus’ rejection by the Jewish leadership and by much of Israel, and the subsequent ministry to the nations (28:16-20) (cf., e.g., Cuvillier, “La Visite,” 80-81).

and stops directly over the child (2:9).¹³ This truly is “his” star (2:2) and does not stop until it illumines the one it represents; it leads the magi to fulfill their original goal: they “come” and render the infant Jesus προσκύνησις (2:9; cf. 2:2). The story resolves as the magi are providentially guided away in a manner that protects the newborn king (2:12).

How then should we interpret the thrice-repeated προσκυνέω in this passage – homage/obedience rendered to a king, or more strongly, as “worship,” which Matthew will later tell us (4:10) is due to κύριος ὁ θεός alone? Several comments are in order, but let it first be stated that one does not actually know the answer until reading the *whole story*. It is only in light of “repeated readings” that one can come to an accurate judgment on this question. Thus, while we can explore the contours of this passage and come to some preliminary conclusions, our reasoning will become clear only as we consider the rest of the narrative.¹⁴

R. T. France and several others have argued that προσκυνέω here should be taken as the “homage” often given to a king or social superior in Eastern society, and does not “require the attribution of divinity to the one so honored.”¹⁵ Though we will see below that there is reason to complexify this interpretation, there are several points that support

¹³ Davies and Allison note the oddity, *Matthew*, 2.245-6.

¹⁴ Cf. Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 23; also Otto Michel, “Der Abschluss des Matthäusevangeliums: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Osterbotschaft,” *EvT* 10 (1950/51): 21.

¹⁵ France, *Matthew*, 69; cf. Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbständigkeit* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), 31; Eugene Lemcio, *The Past of Jesus in the Gospels* (SNTSMS 68; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 67-8; Peter Head, *Christology and the Synoptic Problem* (SNTSMS 94; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 126-31; J. Lionel North, “Jesus and Worship, God and Sacrifice,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* (eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E.S. North; JSNTSup 263; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 189. Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT 1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006), 57-8. Keener says that the magi’s action reflect appropriate behavior before a ruler or official, but goes on to say that “Matthew implies more than this. Probably the Magi narrative already implies divine honor of some sort” (*Matthew*, 105). He does not explain, however, why exactly we should hear overtones of “divine honor.” Nor does he describe what “divine honor of some sort” means.

a “royal” reading. First, as we saw in our survey above, two of the few figures other than God who receive προσκύνησις in the OT are the Davidic king (Ps 71:11 LXX; cf. *Pss. Sol.* 17:30) and Isaiah’s servant (49:7), both of whom serve as “types” for Jesus in Matthew (cf. 1:1; 12:18-22). Indeed, there are a number of allusions to Psalm 71 (72 MT) in Matt 2:1-12, particularly the combination of pagan rulers travelling from afar to offer gifts and προσκύνησις to the Davidic king (2:12/Ps 71:10-11, 15).¹⁶ Second, we saw that in contemporary Jewish literature προσκύνησις could be employed for figures other than “divine” ones, especially royalty. Third, as also noted above, one of the main themes of our present passage is kingship; Jesus is the true “king of the Jews” (2:2), not Herod. Fourth, and further along these lines, a Solomon typology, highlighting Jesus as “son of David” (cf. 1:1; 9:27), is possibly at play at several points in the passage.¹⁷ Fifth, and lastly, the prominence of Jesus’ “star” (2:2, 7, 9, 10) and the “east/rising” (ἀνατολή; 2:1, 2, 9) readily evokes Balaam’s prophecy in Numbers 24:17-19 of the “star [that] shall rise out of Jacob” (24:17 LXX),¹⁸ which was later read to portend the messianic/Davidic king.¹⁹ Thus, the interpretation of προσκυνέω as “obedience” offered to royalty certainly has merit. While this interpretation is not wrong *per se*, we will nevertheless see that it insufficiently accounts for a number of details in the passage and their correspondences with the larger narrative, all of which suggest we should hear “worship” in the magi’s actions.

¹⁶ Many commentators see Ps 71/2 in the background of our passage.

¹⁷ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:250-1; France, *Matthew*, 62.

¹⁸ Cf. Ephraem Syrus, Hymn 1 in *Hymns on the Nativity* (NPNF 13:418).

¹⁹ Cf. J. J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2010), 71-73; cf. CD VII, 18; 1QM XI, 6; 4Q175, 12; T. *Levi* XVIII, 3; T. *Jud.* 24:1.

We saw earlier that while προσκυνέω can be used of figures other than Israel's God in the OT, it most frequently has reference to the unique worship offered to him in those scriptural texts to which Matthew is deeply indebted. Moreover, Jews contemporary with Matthew were often hesitant to use προσκυνέω for human beings because such action might be misinterpreted as "worship" being offered to a figure other than Israel's God.²⁰ When they did wish to qualify the term, they had a number of ways of so doing (e.g., the refusal tradition, explicitly identifying God as the one worthy of praise, etc.). Matthew's unqualified use of the term here for Jesus initially suggests that, at the least, he is less concerned to distinguish the προσκύνησις offered to the Father (4:8-10) and that which is offered to Jesus.

However, it is the narrative itself which provides some of the most telling points for our interpretation of προσκυνέω in 2:1-12. We will discuss them in five points.

First, the suggestion above that the royal typology in the passage precludes taking the προσκύνησις offered by the magi as "worship" operates on something of a semantic fallacy. It assumes that since royalty – and particularly the Davidic king in the OT – could receive προσκύνησις, then Matthew must be operating with the same royal/messianic connotations, such that we should see a one to one correspondence between, say, the προσκύνησις in Ps 71 (LXX) and that in our current passage.²¹ But this way of reading neglects Matthew's story as the "meaning determining discourse"; the narrative itself extends and/or recasts the terms it uses as well as the OT texts to which it

²⁰ Cf. Chapter 1 above.

²¹ E.g., Fiedler (*Matthäusevangelium*, 57-8) says, "Er bringt damit [his use of προσκυνέω] die nachösterliche Perspektive deutlich zur Geltung. Das berechtigt jedoch nicht zur Annahme, er habe den Unterschied zwischen der Anbetung Gottes und der Verehrung Jesu Christi verwischt. Dagegen spricht Mt 4,10 ebenso wie Ps 71,11 LXX."

alludes; royal typology and OT quotations must be read within the christological world Matthew's narrative creates.²²

While Matthew has indeed argued already that Jesus is "Messiah" and "son of David" (1:1-17), he further defined *this* Messiah as decidedly different from all other "sons of David." Joseph did not "beget" Jesus (ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν) like all the other fathers begat their sons (1.2-16a), but Jesus "was begotten" (ἐξ ἧς [μαριὰμ] ἐγεννήθη [1:16b]), the "divine passive" of which prepares for the narration of Jesus' unique begetting (1:18-25).²³ Jesus is an "adopted" son of David through Joseph's naming (1.21, 25), while more precisely, as the reader knows, he is actually "begotten of the Father" and named by *him* (cf. 1:18, 22),²⁴ and is thus the "Emmanuel" (1:23).²⁵

Significantly, the visit of the magi "re-activates" many of these christological themes from chapter one by paralleling a number of its catch phrases, the most important of which recalls Jesus' unique begetting. In 2:4, Herod alters the magi's "king of the Jews" (2:2) to "Christ" (2:4), asking, ποῦ ὁ Χριστὸς γεννᾶται; His question recalls the climax of Matthew's genealogy: Ἰακώβ δὲ ἐγέννησεν τὸν Ἰωσήφ τὸν ἄνδρα Μαρίας, ἐξ

²² This way of reading – largely neglecting the "implied reader" in favor of the "story" level – is one which we shall attempt to counter repeatedly. Note Wittgenstein's dictum: "When language-games change, then there is a change in concepts, and with the concepts the meanings of words change" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty* [Germ. and Eng. Oxford: Blackwell, 1969], §65); cf. also Kingsbury, "The Figure of Jesus in Matthew's Story: A Literary-Critical Probe," *JSNT* 21 (1984): 8.

²³ Cf. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 165-6; Stendahl describes 1:18-25 as "an enlarged footnote" to explain Jesus' rather different origins and his place in David's line ("*Quis et Unde?*" 102).

²⁴ Though 1:18-25 uses the explicit language of "Holy Spirit" to speak of Jesus' begetting, God as his "Father" is implied at several points, especially 1:22-23, where the citation formula unusually adds "by the Lord" (ὕπὸ κυρίου), followed by the language of sonship in the Isa 7:14 quotation (cf. Rudolph Pesch, "Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog (Mt 1-2). Beobachtungen zu den Zitationsformeln der Reflexionszitate," *Bib* 48 [1967]: 409-11). We discuss this further in chapter 5, but see the brief discussion below.

²⁵ This term too remains ambiguous at this point in the narrative. Is it to be translated "God with us," or, "God [is] with us"? Again, our discussion must be delayed until chapter 5. Further, John Nolland has argued at length that there is "no Son-of-God Christology in Matthew 1:18-25" in his article by the same title (*JSNT* 62 [1996]: 3-12). We will also address his argument in chapter 5.

ἦς ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς ὁ λεγόμενος χριστός (1:16). Herod's words are the first time the term χριστός (along with his begetting) has been mentioned since its introduction in 1:16-18; the repetition of the words χριστός and γεννάω recalls the distinct “begetting” recently narrated.

Jesus' unique begetting is further evoked when the magi enter Jesus' home: καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ (2:11). The addition of their seeing “Mary, his mother” (Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ) requires comment, since (1) to this point Mary has not been mentioned at all in this passage, (2) the magi's focus and goal is clearly the “child” (2.2, 11), and (3) she is not named again until 13:55. Why, then, the seemingly out-of-place mention of “Mary, his mother”? The mention of “Mary, his mother” in 2:11 not only recalls the aberrant “begetting” formula in 1:16 that portends Jesus' unique conception, but the entire conception narrative, which begins, μνηστευθείσης τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ (1:18), and goes on to stress the Spirit's/Father's role in Jesus' begetting.²⁶

Further, Matthew's stress on Jesus' “mother” contrasts noticeably with the language used for Joseph's relation to Jesus. In the following account of the flight to Egypt, for example, the focus is squarely on Joseph, not Mary. There, the phrase “the child and his mother” is repeated four times, all of which are commands to Joseph (2:13, 14, 20, 21). But with reference to Joseph, Jesus is always and repeatedly referred to as

²⁶ Cf. Gnllka, *Matthäus*, 40. Further confirming our interpretation of “Mary, his mother” in 2:11 is the occurrence of a strikingly similar pattern in 4:21-22, where Matthew adds the unnecessary phrase “with Zebebee their father” (4:21b) to whom he has just made reference in 4:21a (compare Mark's lack of “their father,” 1:20). Then again in 4:22 he says that James and John “immediately left the boat *and their father*” to follow Jesus. The repetition of “their father” serves to underscore the extent of their obedience to and sacrifice for Jesus' call, even to the point of leaving their father in the middle of tending their nets, a theme that Matthew later revisits (10:37; 19:29). As in 2:11, this small addition highlights a major christological theme in the narrative.

“the child” (τὸ παιδίον), never as Joseph’s “son.” Moreover, Joseph is never endorsed as Jesus’ “father” in this episode or elsewhere.²⁷ This linguistic pattern again recalls and emphasizes the identity of Jesus’ “real” Father; Jesus is Son of God

While at a later point we will trace further the narrative’s focus on Jesus’ unique sonship, for the point at hand we can note that it explicitly sets him above and differentiates him from Solomon (12:42) and David (22:42-5). Further, in 2:2 Jesus is already “king of the Jews.” Despite the fact that Herod rules as king, and despite the fact that Jesus (obviously) has not been anointed king over Israel, he is nonetheless king from birth. This is so because he is the Son of the Father, who is himself King over his people (cf. 2:6, 5:35, 18:23). As we will see in a later chapter, Matthew seals his narration of Jesus’ unique sonship by pairing his ending with his beginning – the Son born of the Father is included in the one name of God (28:19), binding together the identity of Father and Son in the most intimate way.²⁸

The upshot of these observations is that Jesus’ kingship – and more specifically the titles “son of David,” “Messiah,” “King of the Jews,” etc. – must be read within the symbolic world of Matthew’s narrative. When we hear the “royal” overtones in 2:1-12, we cannot separate those from what the story has already told about Jesus’ identity (and what it later will tell us). He is “Son of God” not only in the messianic sense; he is the

²⁷ At only one point in the narrative is Joseph referred to as Jesus’ “father,” and there the reader knows the crowd is mistaken in its assessment (13:55; see our discussion in chpt. 4).

²⁸ Cf. Adelheid Ruck-Schröder, *Der Name Gottes und der Name Jesu. Eine neutestamentliche Studie* (WMANT 80; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1999), 127-9.

offspring of the Father. These literary factors function to suggest that the προσκύνησις Jesus receives may in fact be more than “homage” offered to an earthly king.²⁹

Second, Jesus’ identity is further bound to the Father’s through the formula citation in 2:6,³⁰ which evokes the language already used for Jesus in 1:21.³¹ In 2:6 the Father declares through the prophet that a ruler will come forth “who will shepherd my people Israel” (τὸν λαὸν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ). Yet, in 1:21 the “people” are explicitly identified as belonging to Jesus: σώσει τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν αὐτῶν.³² To read 1:21 and 2:6 as part of the same narrative web, and not as totally distinct pericopes, is to see these two texts as mutually interpretive and in service to Matthew’s larger christological themes – Jesus participates in the Father’s unique rulership over “his people,”³³ because he is his Son (cf. 16:18).³⁴ Further supporting this close identification of Father and Son is that in 1:21 the people not only belong to Jesus, but Jesus “ist

²⁹ Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:237.

³⁰ Menken does not consider this passage a “formula citation,” technically, though for our purposes it does not matter (Maarten J. J. Menken, *Matthew’s Bible: The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist* [BETL 173; Leuven: Peeters, 2004], 256).

³¹ Cf. Dale C. Allison, Jr., “Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*,” in idem, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 138.

³² αὐτοῦ here clearly refers to Jesus, the most immediate antecedent. Who exactly the “people” are (Israel or the new community Jesus establishes) is highly debated, but in 1:21 and 2:6 their referent is the same inasmuch as those whom Jesus “saves” (1:21) are precisely those whom he “shepherds” (2:6). Note also the subtle but significant shift in Matthew’s citation of Isa 7:14 in 1:23. Matthew changes Isa 7:14 from καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ (שמך [העלמה] וקראתה) to καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, reflecting the “people” of 1:21 whom he will save.

³³ “His people” is, of course, used prolifically throughout the OT to refer to the unique covenantal relationship God has with Israel. Even when David is established over God’s people as shepherd, they still belong to God. See, for example, 4Q504 IV, 6-7: “You chose the tribe of Judah. You have established Your covenant with David, making him a princely shepherd over Your people (כְּרִיעִי נָגִיד עַל עַמְּכָה).” (all DSS translations from Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg Jr., and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* [San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2005]).

³⁴ This is similar to the way in which the “kingdom” belongs both to Jesus and the Father throughout Matthew (cf. 13:41, 43).

[auch]...begabt, analog zu dem traditionell Gott vorbehaltenen Handeln,”³⁵ especially considering the likely allusion to Ps 130.8 (cf. Isa 43:3, 11; 45:21, etc.).³⁶ Jesus saves “his people” from sin as YHWH does in the OT.³⁷ Put succinctly, 1:21 and 2:6 work together to tighten the link between Father and Son – they both rule and redeem “Israel,” further pointing to “worship” as the appropriate nuance of προσκύνησις.

Third, the traditional interpretation of the gifts of the magi (going back at least to Irenaeus)³⁸ is almost universally rejected by modern commentators and the gifts are

³⁵ Ruck-Scröder, *Der Name Gottes und der Name Jesu*, 262 (though cf. 1 Macc 9:21 and 4Q174 [Florilegium] I, 13 where Judas Maccabeus and the future Davidic king, respectively, are spoken of as the “savior” of Israel).

³⁶ Cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 24; also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:210. Figures other than God occasionally came to be expected to deliver Israel in early Judaism, though the explicit connection made between Jesus’ saving act and sin is probably unique.

³⁷ Some scholars argue that 1:21 does not mean that *Jesus* saves, but God *through* Jesus. For example, Mark Allen Powell says, “Since the word ‘Jesus’ literally means ‘Yahweh saves’ or ‘Yahweh is salvation,’ the implication of Matt. 1:21 is that God will actually be the one who saves people from sins but that Jesus will be the agent through whom God does this” (*God With Us: A Pastoral Theology of Matthew’s Gospel* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995], 3 n. 6; cf. also, e.g., Stefan Alkier, “From Text to Intertext: Intertextuality as a Paradigm for Reading Matthew,” *HvTSt* 61 [2005]: 15). But there are several problems with this interpretation that Powell does not address. First, it is not clear how his statement above coheres with his (correct) statement two pages later: “Grammatically, *autou* in 1:21 refers most naturally to Jesus [“his people”], not, as is sometimes thought, to God” (5 n.9; *contra*, e.g., Alkier, “From Text to Intertext,” 15). If, as Powell rightly argues, “his people” in 1:21 refers to *Jesus’* people, does not the preceding αὐτὸς in the phrase αὐτὸς γὰρ σώσει also most naturally refer to Jesus, indeed, emphatically so (cf. also 3:12)? Moreover, Jesus is consistently the subject of σώζω throughout the Gospel. Particularly telling are occasions like 14:30, where Peter calls out to Jesus in the language of the Psalms: κύριε, σῶσόν με (cf. also 8:25). Following Powell’s argument, should we assume that Peter is calling to “God” *through* Jesus? This is certainly not how the text reads. As we will argue later, this passage shows Jesus called upon as the κύριος of wind and wave, and the disciples’ subsequent “worship” of Jesus in 14:33 confirms that they, in fact, attribute the saving act to Jesus (cf. also, e.g., the irony created in 27:42 with the verb σώζω). Finally, Powell’s statement does not sufficiently reckon with the narrative shape of Jesus’ identity as the filial κύριος, Son of the paternal κύριος, which Matthew develops throughout the story. We will explore this theme in chapter 5, but we can note here that Powell’s “agency” argument inserts a dichotomy between “God’s” actions and “Jesus’” that neither this verse nor the larger narrative can sustain. If we are to speak of an “agency” christology in Matthew, it is more complex on a literary-theological level than Powell has allowed in his interpretation of 1:21.

³⁸ The gift of gold represents Jesus’ kingship, frankincense his deity, and myrrh his impending death (*Haer.*, 3.9.2). See also Otto G. von Simson’s discussion of the visit of the magi in *Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976 [orig. 1948]), 69–110. Tertullian, at least at one point, interprets the gold and “incense” as an offering to Christ as King (*Answer to the Jews*, 7.9).

simply taken to represent that which was offered to “royalty.”³⁹ Nonetheless, I would argue that there is some significant exegetical payoff in attending to the traditional interpretation.

Gold probably does have royal connotations. We saw above that Ps 71 (LXX) is likely echoed in our passage, especially in 2:11 with the combination of the words προσκυνέω and δῶρα (Ps 71:10-11). The link is strengthened in that the magi offer Jesus “gold,” the gift offered by the nations to the king of Israel (Ps 71:15). But the traditional interpretation of frankincense as representative of Jesus’ “deity” warrants further comment.

Why does Matthew go on to mention λίβανος? It is true that “myrrh and frankincense” are mentioned together in connection with Solomon (Song 3:6; 4:6, 14), but thematically there are very few links with Song 3:6.⁴⁰ By far the most common use of frankincense in the OT is for its burning in Temple worship as an offering to YHWH (see esp. Lev 2:1, 2, 15, etc.; Isa 43:23; Jer 17:26).⁴¹ The cultic connection with frankincense in Matt 2:11 is strengthened by the verbal pattern noted above, that is, ἔρχομαι + προσκυνέω. Davies and Allison note that ἔρχομαι followed by προσκυνέω denotes a cultic action in the LXX.⁴² Further, the christological significance of the phrase for the

³⁹ Cf., e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:247; France, *Matthew*, 76. J. Duncan M. Derrett, however, looking at the broader pagan context, takes all three gifts to connote a “worshipful” act (“Further Light on the Narratives of the Nativity,” *NovT* 17 [1975]: 103).

⁴⁰ Contra Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:251.

⁴¹ Also in the ancient world more broadly, frankincense was often used for sacral purposes, cf. Walter Bauer and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3d. ed; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 594.

⁴² *Matthew*, 1:238

narrative emerges as one reads on – this formula (usually with προσέρχομαι)⁴³ is not incidental and limited to 2:1-12, but becomes almost a “formelhaften Einleitung” for how one is to approach Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel (cf., e.g., 8:5; 9:18, 20).⁴⁴ Indeed, in light of its repeated use in contexts that recall Temple ceremonies, Grundmann considers that “Jesus ist die Mitte des neuen Kultus.”⁴⁵ Though this interpretation must be vindicated as the narrative progresses, it fits nicely with what Matthew has already told of Jesus’ identity: he is “Emmanuel” (1:23).⁴⁶

With these things in mind, we can add that 2:11 includes the magi’s “offer” (προσφέρω) of gifts: προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα (2:11). Several points are worthy of note. First, προσφέρω in the LXX is “mostly a sacrificial term for bringing offerings.”⁴⁷ This is especially the case when it is used with “gift” language (δῶρον), as can be seen in the two terms’ ubiquitous use together in Leviticus and Numbers (cf. also, e.g., Sir. 7:9; Heb 5:1, etc.; *Test. Issach.* 5:3). Second, Matthew’s narrative reuses προσφέρω + δῶρον three more times, all of which refer to an offering made to the Father in the Temple (5:23, 24; 8:4). Third, like (προσ)έρχομαι + προσκυνέω, scholars have noted that προσφέρω with Jesus as its object occurs too frequently in Matthew to be considered incidental.⁴⁸ The

⁴³ Matthew normally uses προσέρχομαι as the term for approaching Jesus, which may have even more “cultic” connotations. Cf. James R. Edwards, “The Use of ΠΡΟΣΕΡΧΕΣΘΑΙ in the Gospel of Matthew,” *JBL* 106 1 (1987): 65-74; Mark Allan Powell, “A Typology of Worship in the Gospel of Matthew,” *JSNT* 57 (1995): 3-17.

⁴⁴ This pattern is not paralleled in the other gospels (cf. Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* [THNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968], 247).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 248.

⁴⁶ As mentioned above, how one interprets “Emmanuel” only becomes clear as one reads the narrative, and will have to await further argumentation.

⁴⁷ Cf. Konrad Weiss, “προσφέρω,” *TDNT*, IX: 65; Moreover, Hebrews, which shares many theological affinities with Matthew, repeatedly (and only) uses προσφέρω cultically.

⁴⁸ Cf., e.g., Edwards, “The Use of ΠΡΟΣΕΡΧΕΣΘΑΙ,” 72. Of its fifteen occurrences in Matthew (Mark: 2; Luke: 4), only three do not have Jesus or God as the object (Jesus as object: Matt:9; Mark: 1; Luke: 2). Significantly, in Matt 17:16 the demon-possessed boy is “brought” to the disciples, but they are *unable* to

language of Israel's cult – its bringing (προσφέρω) of gifts to the “Lord” – now articulates that which belongs to Jesus. We will discuss Jesus' relation to the Temple in Matthew's narrative in more detail later, but we can note that already in this early passage Matthew foreshadows that, in Jesus, τοῦ ἱεροῦ μεῖζόν ἐστιν ὧδε (12:6).⁴⁹

Thus, the traditional interpretation of “frankincense” does in fact contribute to the reader's perception of more than simply “royal” overtones in the passage. We have seen three factors thus far, then, that suggest προσκυνέω in 2:1-12 carries cultic connotations: the cultic language in the passage, the literary-theological connections with Jesus' conception, and the frankincense offering. Two further factors – the numerous OT allusions and the literary links of 2:1-12 with the subsequent narrative – remain to be discussed.

Fourth, at least two important intertexts are likely at play in 2:11 other than Ps 71/2. Almost universally commentators (and NA28) see Isa 60:6 echoed in 2:11. There, Isaiah envisions a day when foreigners will bring their riches to Israel: ἥξουσιν φέροντες χρυσίον καὶ λίβανον οἴσουσιν καὶ τὸ σωτήριον κυρίου εὐαγγελιοῦνται (60:6).⁵⁰ The precise verbal links with our passage are striking – “coming,”⁵¹ “bearing/will bear,” “gold,” “frankincense.” There are thematic links as well with Matthew's narrative –

heal him. Jesus then proceeds to heal him. In 18:24, the wicked servant is brought before his master, who clearly represents God.

⁴⁹ Though Jesus is often said to replace the Temple, this is not quite accurate. For Matthew, it is the new community that is the “Temple,” and Jesus is the “Presence” that dwells within it (e.g., 18.19-20; see chapter 5 below). On Jesus as the new Temple, cf. Boris Repschinski, “Re-Imagining the Presence of God: The Temple and the Messiah in the Gospel of Matthew,” *ABR* 54 (2006): 37-49; David Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God's People in the First Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 225, 240; Kingsbury, “The Figure of Jesus in Matthew's Story,” 19; James Dunn, “How Did Matthew Go About Composing His Gospel?” in *Jesus, Matthew's Gospel, and Early Christianity* (eds. Daniel M. Gurtner, Joel Willitis, and Richard A. Burridge; LNTS 435; New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 55.

⁵⁰ Luz sees Isa 60:6 as primary and Song of Solomon as secondary (Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* [3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007], 1:114); cf. also *Sib. Or.* 3:772-75.

⁵¹ A different verb in the LXX, but a Hebrew verb (בוא) often translated also by ἔρχομαι.

“salvation” (cf. 1:21), and, literally, “gospelizing” (4:23, 9:35, 11:5 [!], etc.). Further instructive is the broader context of the passage, which says that the nations come because:

ὁ φῶς καὶ ἡ δόξα κυρίου ἐπὶ σὲ ἀνατέταλκεν... δὲ σὲ φανήσεται κύριος καὶ ἡ δόξα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σὲ ὀφθήσεται... τότε ὄψη καὶ φοβηθήσῃ καὶ ἐκστήσῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ ὅτι μεταβαλεῖ εἰς σὲ πλοῦτος θαλάσσης καὶ ἔθνων καὶ λαῶν καὶ ἥξουσίν σοι... καὶ πάντα τὰ πρόβατα Κηδάρ συναχθήσονται σοι καὶ κριοὶ Ναβαιωθ ἥξουσίν σοι καὶ ἀνενεχθήσεται δεκτὰ ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριόν μου καὶ ὁ οἶκος τῆς προσευχῆς μου δοξασθήσεται (Isa 60: 1, 2, 5, 7)

The resonances of this whole passage in 2:1-12 and the rest of Matthew’s gospel are too strong to overlook.⁵² The “light” that has “arisen,” attracting the nations, and the “Lord” who has “shone” on his people is, for Matthew, clearly Jesus (2:2, 9; 3:3; 4:15-16).⁵³ And, “my house of prayer” (cf. Matt 21:13) is “fulfilled” in the presence of the Son, the eschatological locus of God’s presence (esp. 1:23; 18:20; 28:20).⁵⁴ In short, the narrative’s christologically-centered evocation of Isaiah’s eschatological vision extends the identification of the Son with the Father; not unlike the Epistle to the Hebrews, Matthew’s Gospel implies that God’s glory is preeminently visible in his Son (cf. Heb 1:3).

⁵² Cf. Miler, *Les Citations D’Accomplissement*, 43-4; Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1977), 187. As noted above, several studies have shown how Matthew often metaleptically evokes the broader context of the passages he cites/alludes to (cf. chpt 1, n. 10). Consider also, for example, that in Matt 11:5, Jesus draws on the very next chapter of Isaiah (61:1) to describe YHWH’s promised restoration coming true in his ministry.

⁵³ Note that in 4:15-16, where Matthew quotes Isa 8:23-9.1, he makes a telling change: φῶς λάμπει (ἥκει) ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς (Isa 9:1) becomes, φῶς ἀνέτειλεν αὐτοῖς. Matthew creates a subtle literary link between the “rising/dawning” of Isaiah’s “light” and Jesus’ star at its “rising” (2:2, 9 - ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ). Cf. similar comments in Beaton, “Isaiah in Matthew,” 68-9. Note also the apocryphal addition of φῶς μέγα from Isa 9:2 (LXX) to Matt 3:16 in the Gospel of the Ebionites in Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30, 13 (cf. William Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* [London: SCM Press, 1998], 90-91, and n. 95).

⁵⁴ On Jesus’ claim on the Temple, see now Andrew Nelson, “‘Who is this?’ Narration of the Divine Identity of Jesus in Matthew 21:10-17,” *JTI* 7.2 (2013): 199-211.

Along similar lines, another likely intertext for our passage is Zechariah's vision of a day when, after the Lord has defeated Jerusalem's enemies, the nations,

ἐλθόντων ἐπὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ ἀναβήσονται κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν τοῦ
προσκυνῆσαι τῷ βασιλεῖ κυρίῳ παντοκράτορι (14:16).

Like Isaiah, Zechariah envisions the nations "coming" (Matt 2:2, 8, 11) to "Jerusalem" (Matt 2:2, 3) in order to "worship" (Matt 2:11) the "King, that is, the Lord." Matthew draws on Zechariah a number of times throughout the narrative, especially Zechariah 14 when speaking of the glorious, eschatological enthronement of the Son of Man (25:31), a passage that elicits the imagery of YHWH's enthronement.⁵⁵ The verbal and conceptual overlap of Zech 14:6 with Matt 2:1-12 along with these later echoes of Zechariah 14 suggest that it also may be at play here.⁵⁶

These intertexts from Isaiah and Zechariah serve to highlight several important moves in Matthew's narrative at this point. First, we should not hear only one text behind the visit of the magi, such as Ps 71/2, but a whole catena of texts that serve to shape our vision of their visit. Matthew often conflates numerous texts, all of which inform the narrative, and it is probably no different here.⁵⁷ Second, attending to the whole array of texts points to important literary-theological patterns already established in chapter 1 and continued here. Jesus is indeed the king, the son of David, but in such a way that only language drawn from the Temple service and the prophetic visions of the dawning of

⁵⁵ For the influence of Zechariah on Matthew's narrative, see Charlene McAfee Moss, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew* (BZNW 156; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), esp. 146-9. The imagery drawn from YHWH's enthronement in Zech 14 is adopted for the coming of Jesus, the Son of Man. In 25:31-37, like YHWH in Zech 14, the Son of Man comes in "glory" and is enthroned as "King" and "Lord," and proceeds to judge the nations.

⁵⁶ Beyond identifying this or that intertext, the larger point is that Matthew's language in 2:1-12 evokes the common OT image of the nations coming to Zion, bringing gifts, and worshiping the Lord. Cf. esp. Jer 17:26; 41:5 (48:5 LXX); also Isa 2:2; 66:18-23; Jer 16:19; Mic 4:1-3; Hag 2:7-9; Zech 8:22-3.

⁵⁷ Cf., e.g., the combination of Mic 5.1 and 2 Sam 5:2 in Matt 2:6.

God's eschatological glory is sufficient to describe him.⁵⁸ Thus, when we see the magi rendering him προσκύνησις, interpreting it as “obedience” separates what Matthew's narrative holds together – the messianic king who receives the homage of the nations is also the very light/glory of God (Isa 60:6; cf. Matt 4:15-16) and the kingly Lord (Zech 14:16; cf. Matt 25:31-37) whom the nations come to “worship.”

A fifth detail in the magi's action directs our attention to the role προσκυνέω plays in the developing narrative. When Matthew describes the magi's actions toward Jesus, he says, καὶ πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ (2:11). The next time in the narrative we hear these two words is in Satan's climactic temptation of Jesus: καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι (4:9). Jesus, of course, refuses: γέγραπται γάρ, Κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις (4:10). The resonances of the phrase “falling” and “worshipping” between 2:11 and 4:9 become louder when one considers how Matthew's shaping of these passages creates distinctive links between them:

- (1) Luke's account of this temptation does not have πίπτω (Luke 4:7); its presence in Matt 4:9 is conspicuous [Luke: σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ, ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα].
- (2) In 4:10, Jesus cites Deut 6:13/10:20, whose Septuagintal version (Göttingen) reads: κύριον τὸν θεόν σου φοβηθήσῃ (αἰτ) κτλ. Matthew has altered the text (or retained a different reading): προσκυνήσεις replaces φοβηθήσῃ.⁵⁹
- (3) The phrase πίπτω + προσκυνέω plays a decisive role in the communicative effect of each passage:

⁵⁸ Cf. Young Chae, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd: Studies in the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and in the Gospel of Matthew* (WUNT/2 216; Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 380-86. Chae argues, successfully in my opinion, that Matthew portrays Jesus fulfilling Ezekiel 34's vision of YHWH and David as the Shepherd over Israel. The two are conflated, that is, in Jesus.

⁵⁹ On Matthew's alteration of the Deut text, see below (Cf. Maarten J. J. Menken, “Deuteronomy in Matthew's Gospel,” in *Deuteronomy and the New Testament* [LNTS 358; New York: T&T Clark, 2007], 46).

- a. Matt 2:1-12 climaxes with the magi's action: *πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ*.
- b. Matt 4:1-11 climaxes with the devil's third temptation: *ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι*.

(4) Other important thematic parallels obtain as well:

- a. Satan offers Jesus “all the kingdoms of the world and their glory” (*πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν*, 4:8)
- b. The foreign magi come to Jesus as “king of the Jews” (*βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων*) and offer him what is properly described as their “glory” (*δόξα*).⁶⁰

We will explore the temptation narrative in further detail below, but this initial glance already indicates that we are to read these two passages in light of one another.⁶¹ The reader, however, is rightly perplexed when she arrives at 4:9-10. The narrative itself – moving as it does from the revelation of Jesus to the magi to the inauguration of Jesus' messianic ministry at the baptism-temptation – raises significant christological questions.⁶² How can the same *προσκύνησις* be given to Jesus by the magi that the narrative says is reserved for “the Lord God” alone? We have already seen how the binding together of Father and Son in chapters 1 and 2:1-12 begin to suggest how the narrative resolves this tension, but a fuller discussion must await our treatment of later passages. There are yet two further passages to be discussed here in relation to Matthew's stylized use of *πίπτω* and *προσκυνέω*.

⁶⁰ On “glory” in 4:8 as the wealth of the nations, such as the magi bring, cf. Birger Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God's Son (Matt 4:1-11 & Par): An Analysis of Early Christian Midrash* (ConBNT 2:1; Lund: Gleerup, 1966), 66; cf. esp Hag 2:7-9; also Gen 31:1, 16; 1 Kgdms 3:13; 1 Macc 15:32; Rev 21:24, 26.

⁶¹ Recall Matthew's “intratextuality” noted in the introduction. See also Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew's Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* (JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994); cf. also Luz on Matthew's use of repetition (*Matthew*, 2:1-2).

⁶² As Müller asks, “Ist darin ein Widerspruch zu erblicken?” (Markus Müller, “Proskynese und Christologie nach Matthäus,” in *Kirche und Volk Gottes: Festschrift für Jürgen Roloff zum 70. Geburtstag* [Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2000], 213).

We hear the language of “falling” and “worshipping” once again in chapter 18, which further illuminates its use in 2:11. When Jesus illustrates God’s character as “compassionate” toward the most egregious of sinners in the parable of the “wicked servant,” he tells it this way:

πεσὼν οὖν ὁ δοῦλος προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων, Μακροθύμησον ἐπ’ ἐμοί, καὶ πάντα ἀποδώσω σοι. Σπλαγχνισθεὶς δὲ ὁ κύριος τοῦ δούλου ἐκείνου ἀπέλυσεν αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ δάνειον ἀφῆκεν αὐτῷ (Matt 18:26-7).

Several commentators have argued that the occurrence of προσκύνησις here in 18:26 demonstrates that Matthew could use this language for a human king, and therefore it need not imply “worship” when it is used elsewhere for Jesus.⁶³ This argument, however, overlooks three important issues both in the parable itself and in Matthew’s larger narrative. First, the “King” in the story manifestly represents God, and the “servant” an indebted sinner before him. To say the king is a “human” figure is to disregard the referential and symbolic nature of the parable. Second, there is a distinct shift in the way the parable speaks of the action of the servant before the “king” (18:26), and the later action of the (second) indebted servant to his fellow servant (18:29). The latter passage says:

πεσὼν οὖν ὁ σύνδουλος αὐτοῦ παρεκάλει αὐτὸν λέγων, Μακροθύμησον ἐπ’ ἐμοί, καὶ ἀποδώσω σοι.

⁶³ Cf., e.g., North, “Jesus and Worship,” 188; France, *Matthew*, 701 n. 4; Head, *Christology*, 130; cf. Powell, “A Typology of Worship,” 4 (Davies and Allison are undecided, *Matthew*, 2:799).

Tellingly, 18:26 and 18:29 share almost the exact same wording *except* that where 18:26 says, προσεκύνει αὐτῷ, 18:29 says, παρεκάλει αὐτόν.⁶⁴ The passage reserves the phrase πεσὼν + προσκυνέω for the figure that represents God the Father, consistent with the dictum in 4:9-10.⁶⁵ Third, there is no other instance of προσκυνέω in the narrative where it is used for anyone other than the Father or Jesus. This makes it all the more likely that its use in 18:26 is theologically significant.⁶⁶ If here, as elsewhere (4:9-10), it represents

⁶⁴ The only other differences are (1) in 18:29 he is a σύνδουλος, highlighting the fact that both are in the same position (and thus emphasizing the “wickedness” of the first slave all the more), and (2) in 18:26 the servant says he will pay back πάντα (again, highlighting his wickedness – there is transparently no way for him to pay back such an astronomical sum).

⁶⁵ Cf. Pesch, “Der Gottessohn,” 416.

⁶⁶ David Peterson calls such an interpretation “absurd” (*Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992], 104 n.13). However, at least two important points should be noted. First, this interpretation does not destroy the “realism” of the parable, but simply reflects Matthew’s common way of telling parables that transparently reflect the characters they represent as well as the broader concerns of the narrative rather than what one might expect to encounter in “real life.” Examples abound in Matthew. Would a “real” vineyard owner hire someone for an hour and then pay them a full day’s wage (20:1-16; a parable unique to Matthew)? Clearly not, but Matthew is transparently illustrating the gracious character of God. The vineyard owner’s overly generous actions indeed highlight the “unreal” nature of the situation for the express purpose of illustrating the Father’s unique character (cf. 7:11). Or, further, if an inappropriately-dressed guest were dismissed from a dinner (a bizarre situation as it is), would the king say he was being thrown out where there was “weeping and gnashing of teeth” (22:13)? No, but the parable is evoking the theological language used already throughout the narrative, and indeed the harshness of the king’s response highlights what the parable is about – impending judgment because of the rejection of the “Son” and his messengers (22:2-4, 6; many other details of this parable reflect larger narrative concerns, e.g., 22:5-7). Many more examples could be cited, but clearly Matthew conflates parabolic language with the theological language of his narrative to illustrate more forcefully the point at hand. So also in the parable of the wicked servant are points exaggerated out of all proportion (e.g., the servant basically owes his master a “zillion dollars,” but says he will pay back “all”) to demonstrate the unpayable debt of sinners and God’s profoundly gracious character (and thus all the more the niggardly and hypocritical character of the servant). Further, a number of Matthean scholars have read 18:26 in precisely the way we are reading it here (see especially the trenchant comments by Martinus C. De Boer, “Ten Thousand Talents? Matthew’s Interpretation and Redaction of the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant [Matt 18:23-35],” *CBQ* 50 [1988]: 221-222; also, e.g., Horst, *Proskynein*, 226-7; Pesch, “Der Gottessohn,” 415; Powell, “A Typology,” 4-5; Moule, *The Origins of Christology* [London: Cambridge University Press, 1977], 176). After working on this material I found that Oppong-Kumi’s recent dissertation on Matthew’s parables came to broadly similar conclusions about the nature of Matthean parables as mine above (Peter Yaw Oppong-Kumi, *Matthean Sets of Parables* [WUNT 2/340; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013], 51-2, and 51 n.72).

the “worship” reserved for Israel’s compassionate God, then we are left with discerning how, exactly, we should hear such language when used with reference to Jesus.⁶⁷

Further relevant is the women’s action in their encounter with the risen Jesus.

With only slightly different wording, Matthew portrays them, too, as falling and “worshiping”:

καὶ ἰδοὺ Ἰησοῦς ὑπὴντησεν αὐταῖς λέγων· χαίρετε. Αἱ δὲ προσελθοῦσαι ἐκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ (Matt 28:9).

The “grasping” of Jesus’ feet along with προσκυνέω evokes the same image we have observed in the three passages already discussed. More importantly, it provides a striking inclusio with and evocation of the magi’s visit through five shared verbal elements: (1) the attention-grabbing particle “ἰδοὺ” (cf. 2:1, 9), (2) the “joy” (χαρᾶς μεγάλης; χαίρετε) encountered in meeting Jesus (28:8, 9; cf. 2:10: ἐχάρησαν χαρὰν μεγάλην),⁶⁸ (3) the stylized “approach” (προσέρχομαι; cf. 2:11: ἔρχομαι) to Jesus,⁶⁹ (4) falling to the ground (cf. 2:11), and (5) the use of προσκυνέω to describe the response to Jesus’ presence.⁷⁰

Further, these two passages share an important element in narrative time – they both occur “outside” of Jesus’ public ministry, and serve as the literary frame of the Gospel, as prologue and epilogue.⁷¹

⁶⁷ The misinterpretation of Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 18:26 turns on the readers’ failure to hear it within the narrative world Matthew constructs and the insistence on hearing it only at the “story” level.

⁶⁸ Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 591 who rightly sees an echo of the “joy”(χαρά) in 28:8 in Jesus’ “greeting” (χαίρετε) in 28:9. Further confirming the echo of “joy” in 2:10 is that in the resurrection account Matthew adds “joy” to Mark’s “fear” (cf. Mk. 16:8). Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 3:668), and many others, note the echo of 2:10 with the language of “joy.”

⁶⁹ On Matthew’s stylized “approach” language for Jesus, see the discussion above.

⁷⁰ Cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:495.

⁷¹ Cf. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 321-23. Frankemölle’s chart on p. 322 illustrates the literary connections between the prologue and epilogue of the Gospel.

It has commonly been observed that the resurrection narrative evokes the infancy narrative, especially regarding the inclusio of Jesus' "presence" as Emmanuel (1:23/28:20). Less commonly observed, but equally important, is the evocation of other parts of the infancy narrative in Matthew's resurrection account.⁷² Just as the first outsiders who encounter the infant Jesus fall down and worship him, so also the first to encounter him after his resurrection do likewise.⁷³

The literary interplay of these four passages using the language/action of "falling" and "worshiping" the Father and Jesus is of seminal importance for the flow of Matthew's narrative christology. As for the inclusio of 2:1-12 with 28:9 (and v.17), the two function together as the "fitting" beginning and end of the story of God's Son. That is, what the reader is privileged to know about Jesus' identity from the infancy narrative, though hidden (e.g. 8:4, 17:9) and rejected (e.g., 27:40-42) during his servant-shaped messianic ministry, is vindicated in his resurrection and exaltation. The only other two instances of "falling" and "worshiping," which clearly refer to the Father, stand in bold relief to the two instances that refer to the Son. The same action rendered to the Son is that which is offered to the Father. Father and Son stand together over against all other characters in the narrative to whom such action is never offered.

III. Intermediate Summary

In sum, the word προσκυνέω in 2:1-12 serves a number of important literary-theological functions. First, from a narrative-critical point of view, it serves to align the

⁷² Though see, e.g., Frank J. Matera, "The Plot of Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 49 (1987): 242.

⁷³ On προσκυνέω as "worship" in 28:9 & 17, see below.

reader with God's "evaluative point of view."⁷⁴ We must disagree with Müller when he says: "Das Verhalten [die Huldigung] der Magier, mit dem sich die Leserinnen und Leser identifizieren können, *aber nicht müssen*, wird nicht weiter eingeordnet, *sondern es wird eine erzählerische Leerstelle offen gelassen*" (emphasis mine).⁷⁵ On the contrary, the narrative goes to great lengths to stress that the magi's journey from beginning to end is guided providentially and receives the Father's approval.⁷⁶ They declare that they have come to "worship" Jesus (2:2), are then providentially led to the fulfillment of that goal (2:9-11), and likewise are guided home (2:12). Their "great joy" in finding Jesus (2:10) and their προσκύνησις of him are clearly in harmony with what comes before and after this episode; they stand in obvious contrast to the fearful and sinister response of Herod/Jerusalem (2:3, 8, 12).⁷⁷ The reader is, as it were, "taught" from the beginning what the appropriate (and inappropriate) response to Jesus is, of which προσκύνησις is an inextricable piece.

Second, Matthew's introduction of cultic language, of which προσκυνέω is a part, and his interweaving of OT texts about the dawning of YHWH's eschatological glory further shape how the reader will conceive of Jesus throughout the narrative. He bears the presence of the Father in a unique and definitive way, because he is his Son, the authoritative revealer of the Father (cf. 11:27). While this important christological theme

⁷⁴ Cf. Kingsbury, "The Figure of Jesus," 5-6.

⁷⁵ Müller, *Proskynese und Christologie*, 212.

⁷⁶ Whatever negative perceptions of "magi" Matthew's (Jewish-Christian) readers may have had are neutralized by the way Matthew tells the story.

⁷⁷ Cf. Miler, *Les Citations D'Accomplissement*, 45. The appropriateness of the magi's προσκύνησις is further confirmed as the narrative progresses – the magi have acted in a manner harmonious with those respondents to Jesus that the narrative/Jesus condones (e.g., 8:2; 9:18; 14:33, etc.).

is seen only in light of the rest of the story, it is nonetheless operative already in the beginning.

Third, as stated at the beginning of our discussion of 2:1-12, we are not arguing that at this point in the narrative one can definitively read προσκυνέω as connoting “worship” and therefore conclude already that Jesus is, bluntly put, “divine.”⁷⁸ Both the meaning of προσκυνέω and that which constitutes the identity of Israel’s God must be “filled in” as the narrative progresses. What we have done in our reading above, however, is to highlight the way the visit of the magi foreshadows how the narrative will go on to bind together the identity of Father and Son around the language of προσκύνησις.

Fourth – and leading to our next προσκυνέω text – Matthew’s emphasis on προσκυνέω in 2:1-12, especially along with πίπτω in the climax of the scene (2:11), serves as a narrative-christological “hook” when one arrives at 4:8-10 and hears the same language used for “the Lord your God” (cf. 18:26; 28:9). It thus pressures the reader to explore how Matthew can use the same language for the Father and the Son. We now turn to 4:8-10 to continue formulating an answer to that question.

IV. Matt 4:8-10: The Obedient Son

Matthew 4:8-10 occurs as the climactic point in the temptation narrative, which is itself something of the climax of Matthew’s introduction of Jesus.⁷⁹ It is only after Jesus has withstood the temptations of his primary adversary, the devil, that he can go forth to

⁷⁸ Such would be the sort of simplistic account of προσκυνέω that North (“Jesus and Worship”) desires to avoid, though in this attempt he falls short of listening to the whole narrative.

⁷⁹ That Matt 1-4 serves as an “introduction” of Jesus, see Allison (“Structure,” 138) though Allison does not agree with Kingsbury, et al. that 4:17 and 16:21 serve as the key turning points on which the Gospel is structured (cf. 135-7). Cf. also Jack Dean Kingsbury, “The Figure of Jesus,” 7.

announce the coming of the kingdom of heaven (4.17).⁸⁰ Whether or not one sees 4:17 as one of *the* narrative markers for dividing the Gospel into two blocks (along with 16:21), Matthew’s stylized phrase – ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς – certainly serves as one of the story’s commonly employed markers for indicating a significant shift in narrative time;⁸¹ Jesus now goes forth in his public ministry preaching about the kingdom of God.⁸²

Since we are jumping in mid-stream with Matthew 4:8-10, we will first consider the logic of the narrative location of the temptation episode in light of what has preceded it – Jesus’ baptism. Second, we will take a closer look at 4:8-10 as the climax of the temptation to gain clarity on Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω for the identity of the Father, Israel’s κύριος ὁ θεός. Third, we will consider how the temptation episode interacts literarily with the προσκυνέω language in 2:1-12, and how it shapes, and is shaped by, the rest of Matthew’s narrative.

IV.1 The Baptism

The interplay of Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 2:1-12 and his use of it in 4:8-10 can be understood properly only in light of the story that leads up to the temptation – Jesus’ baptism. There is broad agreement that, literarily speaking, the temptation is intricately connected with the preceding baptism narrative. It is, as many have suggested, the narrative outworking of Jesus’ declaration to John that he must “fulfill all

⁸⁰ cf. Powell, “The Plot and Subplots,” 198.

⁸¹ Cf. Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web*, 63. The ongoing debate over whether the Gospel should be outlined around 4:17 & 16:21 or the five “finished” sayings (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1) seems to me somewhat wrong-headed. These phrases are not mutually exclusive in serving as markers that move the narrative along and assist the reader in understanding the narrative’s progression.

⁸² See Frankemölle, who calls the temptation the “Schnittstelle zwischen dem ersten Teil der Vorgeschichte und den nachfolgenden Erzählungen” (*Matthäus*, 1:190-1).

righteousness” (3:15),⁸³ as well as a preliminary vindication of God’s declaration of Jesus as “my beloved Son” (3:17; cf. 4:3, 6).⁸⁴ At the baptism, Jesus surprises John by submitting to baptism, and John consents only once he has (partially? cf. 11:1-6) understood why – it is to be so “now” (ἄρξ ἄρτι), because “now” is the time for Jesus to fulfill all righteousness (3:14-15).⁸⁵

This “now,” along with the phrase “in those days” (3:1), serves a crucial role in what we might call the christologically-shaped “time” of the narrative. Matthew began his story by retrospectively shaping Israel’s timeline around the coming of the Christ (1:1-17). He then went on to tell of the miraculous birth, naming, and “worship” of the one who is “Emmanuel” and “king of the Jews.” This “pre-history” forms, as we argued above, what some have seen as the literary frame of the narrative.⁸⁶ Matt 3:1 and 3:15, however, serve to mark a decisive shift. Gapping⁸⁷ an enormous amount of (chronological) time, we are taken from Jesus’ divinely-guided move to Nazareth as a babe (2:22-23) to the eschatologically loaded “those days” (3:1) of John the Baptist.⁸⁸

⁸³ Cf., e.g., Müller, “Proskynese und Christologie,” 213; Luz, “Eine Thetische Skizze,” 231. There is no space here to enter into the long discussion of what “fulfill all righteousness” means in Matthew’s Gospel, though cf. Luz, *op. cit.*

⁸⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:147; Mogens Müller, “The Theological Interpretation of the Figure of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew: Some Principle Features in Matthean Christology,” *NTS* 45 (1999): 166-7; Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God’s Son*, 19.

⁸⁵ Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 1:324) helpfully gloss ἄρτι as “for the moment at least,” drawing out the temporal nature of Jesus’ earthly vocation. That is, “now” is not used to emphasize the immediate present (as in “Do it now!”) but in the weaker sense, “at the present time” (cf. Bauer and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 136). This interpretation makes sense both of Jesus’ explanation in 3:15b and that “the strange turnabout is to be allowed for the time being” (cf. Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13* [WBC 33A; Dallas: Word Books, 1993], 55-6).

⁸⁶ Cf., e.g., Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web*, 67; also, along these lines, Charles Talbert, *Matthew* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 28-9.

⁸⁷ I am using this term in the narratological sense. The leap in time is intentionally jarring and alerts the reader to a new stage of the story.

⁸⁸ On the eschatological interpretation of 3:1, cf. David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 33; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:288.

The phrase “those days” (3:1) along with John’s preaching of the kingdom (3:2) and his announcement of the “coming one” (3:3, 11) mark the inauguration of God’s eschatological work, the end of the exile announced by Isaiah (3:3; cf. 1:17). The “story proper” is about to begin; the main figure is about to come on stage.⁸⁹

The reader anticipates that the “stronger one” who will “baptize with the Holy Spirit” (3:11-12) is Jesus, especially with the reappearance of the Holy Spirit for the first time since Jesus’ conception (1.18, 20).⁹⁰ The stage is thus set for Jesus to fulfill what the narrative has told the reader/hearer he was born to do (1:17, 21).

However, when Jesus shows up for the first time as an “active” character in the narrative, John (and the reader) are shocked by his actions:

Τότε παραγίνεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην πρὸς τὸν Ἰωάννην τοῦ βαπτισθῆναι ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ. ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης διεκώλυεν αὐτὸν λέγων· ἐγὼ χρείαν ἔχω ὑπὸ σοῦ βαπτισθῆναι, καὶ σὺ ἔρχῃ πρὸς με; ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· ἄφες ἄρτι, οὕτως γὰρ πρέπον ἐστὶν ἡμῖν πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην. τότε ἀφίησιν αὐτόν (3:13-15).

John verbalizes what the entire narrative thus far has led the reader to feel – surely Jesus needs no baptism (3:14; cf. 3:6)!⁹¹ Yet, the narrative has also led the reader to trust Jesus’ “evaluative point of view,” and confirms it immediately with the Father’s affirmation of his Son (3:17. cf. 2:15). As a result, Jesus’ statement in 3:15 – the first words he utters – is of paramount importance for reading not only the temptation episode immediately to follow, but the rest of the narrative. The pithy but theologically pregnant phrase Ἄφες ἄρτι paired with πληρῶσαι πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην serves as the theological rationale behind

⁸⁹ Cf. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 45, 55.

⁹⁰ Though see the discussion of this passage in chapter 5.

⁹¹ Hagner rightly notes the various syntactical and lexical features that make John’s refusal emphatic (cp. 3:13 with 3:14); cf. Hanger, *Matthew 1-13*, 55.

his suffering service that runs like a thread through his earthly ministry (cf., e.g., 4:1-11; 8:17; 12:18-22; 20:28; 26:39). Whereas up to this point the narrative has focused on his “glory” as the one born of the Father, the savior of Israel, the Emmanuel, the king of the Jews who is “worshiped” (2:1-12) and protected by the Father (2:13-23), he is “now” embarking, theologically put, on his “descent,” “eine Epoche der Niedrigkeit.”⁹²

The “now” of 3:15 serves, therefore, as a crucial temporal marker, a janus, as it were. It looks back and confirm John’s (and the reader’s) intuition – Jesus indeed is the “stronger one” (3:11), the one worthy of “worship” (2:11) – and it looks forward in order to validate his coming ministry that will appear to contradict his identity as Emmanuel and king of the Jews. As Schenck puts it, the ἄρτι of 3:15 indicates “der Zeit der Epiphanie des Gehorsams.”⁹³

The significant shift in the narrative-theological time represented by ἄρτι in 3:15 is confirmed by its repetition later in a strikingly similar context. Leaving aside several exegetical difficulties, we can simply note that in 11:7-19 Jesus proclaims John the Baptist as the forerunner of the kingdom, the second Elijah, who will prepare the way of the κύριος (11:10-14; clearly echoing 3:1-4). A cosmological shift in time occurred when John showed up announcing the coming Lord: ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν Ἰωάννου τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ ἕως ἄρτι ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν βιάζεται καὶ βιασται ἀρπάζουσιν αὐτήν (11:12). However one takes the difficult phrase βιάζεται καὶ βιασται ἀρπάζουσιν αὐτήν, it is clear that the John-Jesus duo marks a distinct era, viz., the appearance of the Lord’s

⁹² Reinhart Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium* (BevT 33; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1963), 142.

⁹³ Wolfgang Schenck, *Die Sprache des Matthäus: Die Text-Konstituenten in ihren makro- und mikrostrukturellen Relationen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 49. ἄρτι is a Matthean favorite – Matt:7, Mark: 0, Luke: 0 – and repeatedly used in theologically significant ways in the narrative.

messenger announced in Isaiah and Malachi and the subsequent coming of the “Lord.”⁹⁴ Yet many fail to recognize the “Son of Man” because of the objectionable tenor of his ministry (11:19).

Further, Jesus’ participation “now” in baptism and “fulfilling all righteousness” anticipates the end of the narrative, the other side of the literary frame that brackets Jesus’ birth and infancy, when the “now” of his suffering service is over, and his identity as “King” (cf. 28:18; cf. 2:2) and “Emmanuel” (28:20; cf. 1:23) will be made manifest. The narrative makes this clear in Jesus’ climactic proclamation to the Sanhedrin, where he says, πλὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπ’ ἄρτι ὄψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καθήμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (26:64).⁹⁵ Jesus looks to the day when the “now” of his “fulfillment” ministry is over and toward his exaltation, the vindication of his divine sonship in light of his obedient life and suffering.

In sum, his participation “now” in a baptism of “repentance” (3:2) sets the stage for his messianic ministry and the way in which he will exercise his divine-filial identity in that ministry. He will identify with Israel in repentance and in fact do what Israel has not done – be a faithful and righteous son.⁹⁶

Though seeming to take us far afield, a discussion of the shift in narrative time at 3:1 and 3:15 was necessary to prepare our hearing of the temptation narrative. Jesus’ “mode of being” will be decidedly different from this point until his obedient death. He

⁹⁴ Though, of course, like the other synoptic Gospels, Isaiah’s κύριος is in fact Jesus. We will discuss the christological significance of this identification in chapter 5.

⁹⁵ Matthew adds ἀπ’ ἄρτι to Mark 14:62.

⁹⁶ We will discuss Jesus as the obedient son/Israel in the following section, but cf. Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 187; Dale C. Allison, “The Son of God as Israel: A Note on Matthean Christology,” *IBS* 9 (1987): 74-81; Brandon D. Crowe, *The Obedient Son: Deuteronomy and Christology in the Gospel of Matthew* (BZNW 188; Göttingen: Walter de Gruyter, 2012).

will not exercise his kingship or receive the bounty of the nations (2:2, 11), but will “have no place to lay his head” (8:20), and will be rejected by his own (e.g., 11:20). Only in light of the “now” of 3:15 – the temporal marker that defines Jesus’ ministry of service – can we comprehend the distinctive shape of Jesus’ ministry as the obedient son, paradigmatically demonstrated in the temptation narrative.

IV.2 προσκύνησις to the Lord God

Turning to the temptation narrative itself, we can summarize briefly the majority of the episode in order to come quickly to Matthew’s second use of προσκυνέω. We argued above that the temptation narrative is the climax of Matthew’s introduction of Jesus, whereafter he embarks on his public ministry, preaching the kingdom of God (4:17). The temptation serves to introduce how Jesus will “recapitulate”⁹⁷ Israel, and exemplifies how he will “fulfill all righteousness” (3:15). This theme of recapitulating Israel has already been seen in the infancy narrative’s intertextual linking of Jesus with both Moses⁹⁸ and Israel (e.g. 2:15), and it is confirmed subsequently in the temptation episode. There, Jesus is in the “desert” for forty days and is tempted regarding hunger, God’s faithfulness, and idolatry, just as Israel was tested in the desert for forty years on those very issues.⁹⁹ Where Israel failed, and as a result the first generation was not allowed to enter the land, Jesus succeeds. Thus, if 1:1-4:16 are the introduction of and

⁹⁷ Cf. Joel Kennedy, *The Recapitulation of Israel: Use of Israel’s History in Matthew 1:1-4:11* (WUNT 2/257; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008); Terence L. Donaldson, “The Mockers and the Son of God,” *JSNT* 41 (1991): 11; Allison, “The Son of God as Israel,” 76-77.

⁹⁸ There is rather broad agreement on Matthew’s use of Moses typology in the birth narrative, especially regarding the persecution by Herod (Pharaoh) and the miraculous rescue of the child.

⁹⁹ Cf. Gerhardsson, *The Testing of God’s Son*, 40; Wilhelm Wilkens, “Die Versuchung Jesu Nach Matthäus,” *NTS* 28 (1982): 479-89; Talbert, *Matthew*, 60; Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 38-9.

basis for the rest of the narrative's christology,¹⁰⁰ then the temptation narrative is the climax of the introduction where the reader learns just what it will look like for the "Son of God" to "fulfill all righteousness"¹⁰¹ – a ministry of self-denial and obedience to the Father in the face of manifold temptation.¹⁰²

With an eye toward the broader narrative context of the temptation episode, we turn now to 4:8-10 and examine Matthew's use of προσκυνέω. Having successfully thwarted Satan's efforts in the first two temptations, Jesus is led to a "very high mountain" (4:8). The spatial ascent from the desert (4:1), to the pinnacle of the Temple (4:5), to this *cosmologically* high mountain (4:8) corresponds to the rising intensity and import of each temptation.¹⁰³ In this last temptation, Satan abandons requesting proof of Jesus' divine sonship, and asks of him that which represents the core of Israel's devotion to its God – worship – in trade for worldwide dominion:¹⁰⁴

Πάλιν παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν καὶ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι. τότε λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὕπαγε, σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ· κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις (4:8-10).

First, Satan claims the right to give "all the kingdoms of the world" to Jesus. While Luke has Satan reaffirm his right over these kingdoms (4:6), Matthew has no such assertion. In fact, it is unclear, especially at this point in the narrative, whether Jesus (and

¹⁰⁰ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 161

¹⁰¹ Pierre Bonnard, *L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (Geneve: Labor et Fides, 1992), 42.

¹⁰² Talbert, *Matthew*, 60; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 46.

¹⁰³ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:352.

¹⁰⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 1:153. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:371.

the reader) is to believe Satan.¹⁰⁵ Davies and Allison argue that Satan's claim accords with the "pessimism abroad in late antiquity,"¹⁰⁶ which is of course true. But does it accord with the rest of Matthew's narrative?

On the one hand, according to the narrative, "the kingdom of heaven" is clearly not yet established on earth, and thus the "world" (κόσμος) might be considered "Satan's" (6:10). Later, Jesus warns of gaining the whole "world" (τὸν κόσμον) and forfeiting one's soul (16:26).¹⁰⁷ Thus, the narrative envisions some kind of worldwide lordship that operates apart from/over against God's rule.¹⁰⁸

On the other hand, the rest of the narrative makes it clear that the Father is the true "Lord of heaven and earth" (11:25), and he alone gives that lordship to his Son (11:27; 28:18). Indeed, these later texts highlight the contrast in lordship quite clearly. Satan offers *πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου*, while God is highlighted as *κύριος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς* (11:25). To rule the cosmos apart from its intersection with the heavenly kingdom is to rule as a false Lord, which is precisely the lordship Jesus declares his ministry is bringing to an end (12:28-9). Further, Jesus and the reader know that while Satan's claim has some truth (as in the other temptations), the truth lies in what he does not say.¹⁰⁹ There is only one true Lord of both heaven and earth, which Jesus' rebuttal of

¹⁰⁵ The ambiguity is similar to the previous temptation – *would* God save Jesus if he threw himself off the Temple? Regardless, Jesus affirms that such testing of God betrays the humble submission required of the Son.

¹⁰⁶ *Matthew*, 1:371.

¹⁰⁷ Nolland, *Matthew*, 134-6.

¹⁰⁸ A common dualism in Jewish apocalyptic.

¹⁰⁹ On the key to reading Satan's temptations as hearing what he does *not* say, see Kennedy, *Recapitulation*, 203.

Satan highlights, as we will see below.¹¹⁰ The significance of this point we will explore further when discussing 11:25-7 and 28:16-20, but for now it is sufficient to say that reading Satan's offer in light of the rest of the narrative highlights one of the key ways in which the narrative "identifies" God – he alone is the true Lord of heaven and earth.

Second, Satan requests that Jesus "fall and worship" him (πεσὼν προσκυνήσης μοι). Two factors confirm that we should take προσκυνέω here in the strongest sense, that is, as "worship." First, Jesus' response that such an act is appropriate only for God makes it clear that he interprets Satan's request as infringing on that which is due to God alone (4:10, cf. Deut 6:13).¹¹¹ Second, Satan makes the request in light of his implicit claim to worldwide lordship (4:8), which, as we saw above, is only partially true. The true ruler of both heaven and earth is the Father (11:25). That is, the subtext here, and throughout Matthew's narrative, is the battle between God and Satan over who rules the cosmos, and therefore, who is worthy of "worship," for the one who so rules is in fact "Lord" (cf. again 11:25). There is, then, a certain logic to Satan's request – he claims lordship and the right to grant it, and therefore demands worship.

That Satan, however, is not worthy of such honors is seen from Jesus' response:

Ὑπαγε, Σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ, Κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.

There is broad agreement that Deut 6:13 and its context serve as the intertexts for Jesus' response, a chapter which strongly emphasizes Israel's exclusive devotion to the κύριος and warns against following other gods. In light of the Lord's deliverance of Israel from

¹¹⁰ Cf. John Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.*, XIII.4-5 (NPNF 10:153-5), who says that here the devil makes himself out to be God, thus sinning directly against the Father by claiming to be artificer of the universe; also Calvin, *Harmony*, 95.

¹¹¹ And, everywhere in Deuteronomy, which Jesus subsequently quotes, προσκυνέω bears this meaning.

Egypt and his (future) abundant provision for them in the land, Israel has “one Lord” (e.g. 6:4, 10-12, 14). Further, many also see Deut 10:20 as a relevant intertext. Both Deut 6:13 and 10:12 are nearly identical:¹¹²

κύριον τὸν θεόν σου φοβηθήσῃ καὶ αὐτῷ λατρεύσεις...

Joel Kennedy has convincingly argued that Deut 10:20 and its broader context should be equally heard along with Deut. 6:13 in Jesus’ response, since it recalls Israel’s disobedience in the desert precisely regarding the issue at hand for Jesus – idolatry.¹¹³ We would add to Kennedy’s argument that the more immediate context of Deut 10:20 is strongly echoed in the third temptation. Deut 10:12-22 forms a unit that constitutes a “recollection and summation” of Israel’s requirements before God.¹¹⁴ Despite the fact that God is the universal Lord to whom belong “the heavens” and “the earth” (10:14), he has nonetheless uniquely chosen Israel and their descendants (LXX: σπέρμα) out of love (v. 15). He alone is the “great,” “mighty,” and “awesome” God who “executes justice,” and therefore alone should be feared and served by his chosen people (17-20). In light of the third temptation’s subject of universal lordship (4:8), the broader temptation theme of Jesus’ sonship/Israel typology (4:3, 6, cf. 3:15), and Jesus’ later confession of the Father as “Lord of heaven and earth” (11:25), Deut 10:12-22 illuminates the logic of Jesus’ response – the faithful Son worships only the true Lord of heaven and earth.

Of further importance is that Matthew’s Jesus changes what originally read as “fear” (φοβηθήσῃ/אירא) to “worship” (προσκυνήσεις), and has added μόνῳ to the

¹¹² In the LXX they are identical; in the MT, the second halves differ only slightly.

¹¹³ Kennedy, *Recapitulation*, 208-212; cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:91.

¹¹⁴ J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy* (AOT 5; Leicester: Apollos, 2002), 199.

passage.¹¹⁵ Whether Matthew has taken over this text from tradition “as is” or has modified it himself is somewhat beside the point, since the text gains its primary significance from the narrative context into which Matthew weaves it.¹¹⁶ Further, Matthew often modifies his sources’ quotations of the OT in some way, and in fact did so already in the first temptation’s quotation of Deut 8:3.¹¹⁷ Matthew, that is, demonstrates acute awareness of the OT texts he uses, even if taking it over from another source,¹¹⁸ and he is especially attuned to Deuteronomy.¹¹⁹ Alterations to the OT texts he cites carry *prima facie* interpretive significance.

As has often been observed, the change to προσκυνήσεις parallels the devil’s request in 4:9, whereas the original φοβηθήσῃ/יִרְאֶה would not have done so.¹²⁰ While this observation is not to be rejected, there are at least four other points to note regarding this change. First, the synonymous parallelism of προσκυνέω and λατρεύω is prominent throughout Deuteronomy (and elsewhere in the OT), and it reflects one of Moses’ common phrases for warning Israel against idolatry. Its use here in Matthew serves to strengthen Jesus’ claim about the exclusive worship due to “the Lord God” by evoking this common theme from Deuteronomy.¹²¹ Second, in Deuteronomy φοβέω is used in a wide variety of ways, both for God and humans (cf., e.g., Deut 1:29, 4:10), but

¹¹⁵ LXX A has προσκυνέω and μόνω.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Menken, *Matthew’s Bible*, 239-241; cf. also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:33.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Menken, “Deuteronomy in Matthew’s Gospel,” 46.

¹¹⁸ Consider, e.g., his deletion of the reference to “Abiathar” in Mark 2:26 (Matt 12:3-4).

¹¹⁹ See, for example, the multi-layered intertextual relation between Matthew’s temptation narrative and Deuteronomy 8, as laid out by Kennedy (*Recapitulation*, 186-192).

¹²⁰ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:373; France, *Matthew*, 135; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 46.

¹²¹ Matthew does not exhibit particular interest in λατρεύω, and certainly not to the degree of προσκυνέω since he nowhere else uses this terminology. The frequent co-occurrence of προσκυνέω and λατρεύω in Deuteronomy and elsewhere in Jewish literature should probably be taken as hendiadys; the phrase as a whole serves to evoke the common warning against idolatry. This seems to be how Matthew takes it, since the double phrase serves to answer Satan’s single request for προσκύνῃς.

προσκυνέω is reserved exclusively for the “Lord” (see above).¹²² Third, the LXX of the second commandment combines προσκυνέω and λατρεύω to speak of Israel’s exclusive devotion to the Lord: οὐ προσκυνήσεις αὐτοῖς οὐδὲ μὴ λατρεύσης αὐτοῖς [εἰδωλον οὐδὲ παντὸς ὁμοίωμα, κτλ.] ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός σου (Exod 20:5/Deut 5:9).¹²³ The obvious thematic and verbal connections between Exod 20:5/Deut. 5:9 and Deut 6:13/10:12, along with the influential and prominent role these texts played in Israel’s liturgical and daily life, may account for the shift from φοβέω to προσκυνέω; it further underscores the uniqueness of the προσκύνησις offered to Israel’s Lord.

The upshot of these first three observations is that the substitution of προσκυνέω in Matt 4:10 strengthens the exclusive nature of this act – the κύριος alone is to receive it. But fourthly, προσκυνέω here resonates with Matthew’s exclusive and frequent use of it elsewhere for the Father and Jesus, whereas φοβέω is used in a variety of ways. (cf., e.g., 1:20; 2:22; 9:8, etc.). Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 4:10, therefore, pressures the reader to explore how its theological function in this passage relates to its christological function elsewhere, which leads us to our next point of discussion.

V. The Grammar of προσκυνέω in 2:1-12 and 4:8-10

Of more pressing christological significance, then, is to read Satan’s temptation in light of what has already transpired in the narrative. As we argued above, Satan’s climactic request in 4:9 – that Jesus “fall down and worship” him (πεσὼν προσκυνήσης μοι) – evokes the equally climactic point of the magi’s visit when they finally encounter

¹²² So also φοβέω is used of many other figures in Matthew’s narrative, while προσκυνέω is reserved for the Father and Jesus.

¹²³ Exod 20:5 and Deut 5:9 are identical in the LXX except that Deut replaces γάρ with ὅτι.

the infant Jesus; they “fall down and worship him” (πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ, 2:11).¹²⁴ The interplay between these narrative moments can be discussed in several points.

First, to read these two passages together is to hear the rich irony in Satan’s request. What Satan offers Jesus – the glory of the worlds’ kingdoms in exchange for προσκύνησις – Jesus has in fact already received proleptically from the foreign magi – their προσκύνησις and “glory.”¹²⁵ Echoing the nation’s coming to the dawning of God’s eschatological glory (Isa 60:6) and their submission to the worldwide rulership of David’s son (Ps 71/2), the magi “fall down and worship” *Jesus* as “king of the Jews” and – Matthew reminds the reader – God’s Son. What Satan attempts to wrest wrongfully from the Son, the Son has already rightfully (if not yet fully) received from the nations, and will receive more fully at the narrative’s climax (28:16-20).

Second, the interplay of 2:11 and 4:9-10 highlights the extent of Jesus’ obedient sonship first signaled in 3:15 and carried forward here. That is, the christologically-determined narrative time that we discussed above now pays further dividends. The Son, who by his very identity has the right to rule the nations and receive worship, does not “now” lay claim to worldwide rulership. Rather, he lays claim to Israel’s confession of the one true Lord (4:10; Deut 6:13, 10:12), pointing away from himself to the Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. By doing this at the outset of his ministry, he sets his trajectory to “fulfill” (3:15) his role as the “well-pleasing Son” (17:5) who will give his life (20:28). Put differently, the Son, in his state of voluntarily recapitulating Israel’s sonship, “now”

¹²⁴ See pp. 83-4 above.

¹²⁵ On Matthew’s frequent use of prolepsis, cf. John P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church and Morality in the First Gospel* (New York; Paulist Press, 1979), 32, 37, 53.

turns away from any predilection for dominion apart from its intersection with his Father, and humbly offers to the Father that which Israel so often failed to offer and which led to her exile (cf. 1:1-17) – the worship due to him alone (4:10).

Third, the repetition of πίπτω and προσκυνέω in such close narrative proximity with two different referents raises what Michael Riffaterre calls an “ungrammaticality,” a contradiction in the flow of the narrative that requires of the reader a “second reading” that penetrates to the ungrammaticality’s “significance.”¹²⁶ It must be recalled that it is not simply that προσκυνέω is used both in 2:1-12 and 4:8-10, but rather that it serves a *central* role in the christological and theological “grammar” of each passage. As we saw in 2:1-12, the story is structured around the thrice-repeated προσκυνέω, climaxing at the magi’s “coming” to the child, “falling down” and “worshiping” him. So also in the temptation narrative, the climax occurs in Satan’s request that Jesus “fall down” and “worship” him, with Jesus retorting that the “Lord God” is to be “worshiped.”

The repetition of “falling” and “worshiping” in 4:10 requires of the reader a “retroactive” or “hermeneutic” reading that seeks to discover how the narrative holds its occurrence here together with its occurrence in 2:1-12 (esp. 2:11).¹²⁷ A full retroactive reading can be done only in light of the whole narrative, but here already Matthew’s christologically-restructured theological grammar begins to take shape – Israel’s fundamental act of loyalty to κύριος ὁ θεός also belongs to the one whom that Lord has

¹²⁶ Though originally applying the language of “ungrammaticality” more specifically to poetry (*Semiotics of Poetry* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978]), Riffaterre also applies it more broadly to other literary texts (e.g., “The Interpretant in Literary Semiotics,” in *Reading Eco: An Anthology* [ed. Rocco Capozzi; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997]). Cf. also Jonathan Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (aug. ed.; New York: Cornell University Press, 2001), 81.

¹²⁷ Cf. Riffaterre, *Semiotics*, 5-6.

identified as his Son. What the Son, having taken on the role of obedient Israel, says is due to the Father (4:10), the Father causes to be given to the Son (2:11). The narrative thus sets up a mutuality between Father and Son through the language of “falling” and “worshipping.”

Indeed, in these opening sections of the narrative Matthew is already (re)shaping his readers’ *theological* imaginations around the life of the Son. As we go on, we will see that it will be difficult to conceptualize the theological logic of the narrative apart from its convergence with Johannine (e.g., 17:1), Pauline (2:6-11), and even later Trinitarian grammar. The Father brings the nations to worship and glorify the Son (2:1-12), while the Son in his obedience turns all glory to his Father (4:10), only to receive back from the Father that glory which he voluntarily forfeited (cf., e.g., 11:27; 28:18). To confirm further our reading of the mutually-interpretive infancy-baptism-temptation episodes, we turn to several other points in Matthew’s narrative.

VI. Intratextual Links with the Temptation Narrative

We have argued that the temptation narrative functions paradigmatically both for Matthew’s concept of God’s identity as the one true Lord and also for the messianic ministry Jesus will embody in the ensuing narrative. The narrative-christological importance of the temptation episode, and particularly the third temptation, comes to the fore when one hears its echoes throughout the rest of Matthew’s story. As Frankemölle has said, the temptation narrative “gibt Matthäus in einer programmatischen Schlüssel-

Erzählung, die gleichsam das Tor zum Lebensentwurf Jesu bildet.”¹²⁸ Exploring some of the echoes of the temptation narrative in the rest of the Gospel will highlight two further christological and theological movements within the narrative: (1) in the crucifixion Jesus’ messianic vocation as the obedient son comes to its climax and serves as the narrational counterpart of the fulfillment-obedience motif first signaled in the baptism-temptation episodes; (2) the resurrection narrative reprises and intensifies the Son’s glory first signaled in the first two chapters, and it binds together the identity of Jesus and the Father precisely around the issues of worship and universal Lordship.

VI.1 The Crucifixion

We said above that the baptism-temptation narrative functions as the climax of Matthew’s introduction of Jesus and one side of the frame for the ensuing narrative of Jesus’ messianic ministry. Though he is Emmanuel and Son of God he identifies with Israel and is in some sense “re-doing” what Israel failed to accomplish – be a faithful son. If the baptism-temptation introduces Jesus’ messianic ministry, then the crucifixion serves as its climax and conclusion, which is confirmed by the echoes of the temptation narrative that arise during Jesus’ final hours.¹²⁹ During the crucifixion, those who revile Jesus use the same taunt as the devil in the temptation: σῶσον σεαυτόν, εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ (27:40; cf. 4:3, 6). Both the exact verbal parallel – “if you are the son of God” – and the theme of “saving himself” conjure images of Satan’s temptation of him to turn stones

¹²⁸ *Matthäus*, 187.

¹²⁹ Cf. Donaldson, “The Mockers,” 8.

to bread and to cast himself down (4:6/27:40, 42) to prove his divine sonship.¹³⁰ Further, this “temptation” at the cross not only recalls the earlier temptation narrative, but Jesus’ very identity – his name – interpreted in 1:21 as “he will save (σώσει) his people from their sins.” The mockers, “tempting” him to “save himself” (27:40), are in fact tempting him to deny the very purpose for which he was sent (20:28).¹³¹ The irony is thick, and the reader, privy to the story of Jesus’ conception, knows that it is precisely by *not* saving himself that he *is* saving “his people” (1:21; cf. 20:28; 26:28).

The parallels between the temptation and crucifixion narratives become louder when considering that Matthew explicitly affirms Jesus’ ability to do the very things that he is tempted to do by Satan and the mockers, thereby underscoring all the more Jesus’ obedience. Jesus, Matthew informs us, *does* possess the power to create bread (14:15-21; cf. 4:3-4) and to save himself (26:53; cf. 27:40); indeed, Jesus unique filial authority that fully participates in the Father’s is one of the most prominent motifs in Matthew (e.g., 7:29; 10:1; 11:27, etc.). But in voluntary humiliation Jesus does not use those powers to his own ends;¹³² rather, he obeys the Father’s command to a mission of other-centered suffering (26:39; 12:17-21). The passion is the “last temptation” of Christ, where he is tempted – climactically so – to do his own will rather than that of the Father (26:39).¹³³ In sum, the temptation and crucifixion episodes serve as narrative companions – the former as the introduction to Jesus’ obedient sonship, and the latter as the climax and final

¹³⁰ Cf. Wilkens, “Die Versuchung,” 483.

¹³¹ For the parallels between Satan’s and human opposition to Jesus throughout the Gospel, see Powell, “The Plot and Subplots.”

¹³² Cf. Kennedy, *Recapitulation*, 200.

¹³³ Cf. Donaldson, “The Mockers,” 15

proof/fulfillment of that obedient sonship.¹³⁴ In between the baptism-temptation and crucifixion, he has completed the time of fulfilling all righteousness, the “now” (3:14/26:64) of his obedient sonship and suffering service.¹³⁵

VI.2 The Resurrection

When we finally arrive at Jesus’ resurrection and commissioning of the disciples, we find that it incorporates and sums up a number of important christological themes. First, if the crucifixion serves as the climactic counterpart to the temptation, then the resurrection corresponds to Jesus’ conception and infancy narrated in the first two chapters of the Gospel. That is, the “now” (3:15) of Jesus’ earthly ministry is over; he has “fulfilled all righteousness” in his obedience to the Father, and he is exalted to the status corresponding to his identity as Son and Emmanuel (1:23/26:64/28:16-20). Narratively speaking, the equilibrium of the narrative has been restored – Jesus, having accomplished the mission given him – is vindicated.¹³⁶ As we discussed briefly above, those who encounter him as the resurrected Lord do as the magi did – they fall down and “worship” him (28:9, 17). We will discuss momentarily the interpretation of προσκυνέω as “worship” and the christological implications, but first we turn to the way in which the resurrection, while indeed the narrative complement to the infancy narrative, is also

¹³⁴ For support for this reading of the temptation and crucifixion as an inclusio, Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 3:538. For other significant correspondences between the temptation and passion episodes, see Artur Malina, “Image of God the Father in Matthew 1-4,” in “*Perché stessero con Lui*”: *Scritti in onore di Klemens Stock SJ, nel suo 75° compleanno* (Roma: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2012), 92-3.

¹³⁵ The same movement in the narrative’s time can be seen in 16:13-28. Jesus reaffirms his suffering vocation despite the truth of Peter’s confession and subsequent “satanic” suggestion.

¹³⁶ cf. Donaldson, “The Mockers,” 5.

narrated in light of the whole story of Jesus' obedient sonship, and particularly draws on the episode that demonstrated his obedience *par excellence*, the temptation.

At the resurrection the risen Jesus meets his disciples on a “mountain” (28:16), the locational parallel to the “high mountain” to which Satan leads him for the final temptation (4:8).¹³⁷ He then goes on to declare, ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (28:18), clearly echoing Satan's earlier offer: ταῦτά σοι πάντα [πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν] δώσω (4:8, 9).¹³⁸ Whereas Satan's offer of worldwide dominion to Jesus was contingent – ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι (4:9) – and Jesus refused – κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις (4:10) – so in 28:16-20, when the disciples encounter the risen Jesus, they worship (προσεκύνησαν) *him* in the context of his claim to universal dominion (28:17). Further, as we noted above, the action of the women in their encounter with the risen Jesus (28:9) – grasping his feet and “worshiping” – not only recalls the magi's actions (2:11), but also the “falling” and “worshiping” demanded by Satan (4:8) in response to his claim to and offer of worldwide dominion.

The lexical-thematic correspondences between the nexus of the magi-temptation-crucifixion-resurrection narratives are of paramount significance for Matthew's christologically driven story, the significance of which can be drawn out in several steps. In all of these passages προσκυνέω is repeatedly bound up with universal Lordship. Matthew narrates the magi's προσκύνησις as that which the prophets envisioned was due to the eschatological king and κύριος; Jesus refuses Satan's request in 4:8-10 precisely because Israel confesses one “Lord God” who rules over all things (cf. 11:25), who

¹³⁷ Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:369.

¹³⁸ Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:90; Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 577; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:682.

therefore alone is to be worshiped; the disciples worship (προσεκύνησαν) in the presence of the risen Jesus who declares his universal Lordship over “heaven and earth” (28:17-18). Following the narrative’s logic, the context of Jesus’ universal Lordship over heaven and earth is key for interpreting προσκυνέω as “worship,” since – in Matthew’s theological grammar – it is precisely the one true Lord of all to whom worship is due (4:10; 11:25).¹³⁹

We should not miss the christological claims that the narrative is making about the identity of Israel’s “Lord God.” These mutually illuminative passages include Jesus in the identity of the one who is Lord of heaven and earth; he is, therefore, worthy of worship. Israel’s confession of “the Lord God” is reconfigured to include the Son, the effect of which the climactic “name” (28:18) encapsulates.¹⁴⁰ What Jesus refused Satan and claimed as uniquely belonging to the Father, he too rightly receives because he participates in the Father’s Lordship.¹⁴¹ Moreover, however, the narrative movement from (1) Jesus’ proleptic reception of the magi’s “worship” as the infant king, to (2) his “descent” as the obedient and suffering Son/servant, to (3) his exaltation as the universal Lord precludes any interpretation that would suggest his assumption of authority and

¹³⁹ Of course, such also is the grammar of Second Temple Judaism, not just Matthew’s Gospel. Further, while 28:17 is the only occurrence of προσκυνέω in Matthew that has no expressed object, Jesus is the implied object, as the majority of commentators recognize. In 28:9 the women have “worshiped” Jesus, and the disciples’ action corresponds to the women’s. A number of scribes supplied the missing αὐτῷ/αὐτόν (cf. A W θ, etc.), but it is probably simply a case of ellipsis, since αὐτόν occurs immediately before the verb προσεκύνησαν as the object of ἰδόντες.

¹⁴⁰ We will discuss this text further in chapter 5.

¹⁴¹ Here Stuckenbruck’s observations about the *Ascension of Isaiah*, though debatable at points, are nonetheless instructive: “Monotheism is thus spatially conceived, and the notion of worship is subordinated to this scheme. God is not the only one who is worshiped, but because God reigns over, [sic] the universe all legitimate worship is *ultimately* directed toward God” (“Worship and Monotheism in the Ascension of Isaiah,” in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism*, 74; italics original). The debatable point is whether any figures other than God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are actually “worshiped” (in *Asc. Isa.* or elsewhere). Later in his argument, Stuckenbruck seems to negate his point in the quotation above about other figures receiving “worship” (see, e.g., p. 77).

reception of worship is due only to his status as “God’s...agent faithful to God’s purposes,”¹⁴² or that 28:16-20 represents a “primitive enthronement christology.”¹⁴³ Certainly the narrative has stressed that Jesus is the Father’s faithful agent, and that he has been enthroned as the world’s true Lord, but the narrative has stressed equally that it is because of his unique filial identity that he fulfills that role, and that what he receives in his exaltation corresponds to his divine-filial identity articulated from the beginning of the story. Indeed, as Burnett says, “...28:20 really changes very little for the reader. Jesus has always had the authority he now claims.”¹⁴⁴ Matt 11:25-27, the last text we will examine as relevant to the temptation narrative, further supports this point.

VI.3 Matt 11:25-27: Father and Son in Mutually-Revelatory Relationship

We argued above that 28:18 is not so much Jesus’ exaltation to a “new” status, but the vindication of who he already is from the beginning, which is confirmed by 11:25-27.¹⁴⁵ In 11:25a, Jesus utters the famous *Jubelruf*, where he confesses that the Father is “Lord of heaven and earth,” and is the one who hides and reveals the Son at his will (11:25b-6).¹⁴⁶ The following christological declaration in 11:27 parallels the double confession he has just made of the Father in 11:25-6:

¹⁴² Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 551; cf. also 552.

¹⁴³ Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:683.

¹⁴⁴ Fred W. Burnett, “The Undecidability of the Proper Name ‘Jesus’ in Matthew,” *Semeia* 54 (1991): 132.

¹⁴⁵ We will treat the Father-Son dynamic of 11:25-30 in more detail in chapter 5.

¹⁴⁶ *Contra* Meier (*The Vision of Matthew*, 82-3), I assume that the absolute “Son” language in 11:27 refers to Jesus’ divine-filial identity (not his identity as Son of Man) not only because of the parallel paternal language, but also because elsewhere the Father’s specific revelatory activity pertains to Jesus as “Son of God” (3:17; 16:16-17; 17:5). Of course, the two titles should not be put in opposition to one another.

11:25, 26	11:27
25b. ἐξομολογοῦμαί σοι, πάτερ, κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς	27a. Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου
25c. ὅτι ἔκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις	27b. καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα τις ἐπιγινώσκει εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς
26. ναὶ ὁ πατήρ, ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου	27c. καὶ ὃ ἂν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι.

The parallelism demonstrated above controverts a number of commentators who conclude that the “all things” (27a) handed over to the Son includes only the authority to reveal the Father, not authority over “heaven and earth.”¹⁴⁷ A number of factors, however, suggest that the “all” in which the Son shares in his earthly ministry is in fact a proleptic participation in universal lordship on account of his unique filial identity. We turn to those factors below.

25b. with 27a.

First, the absolute πάντα in 27a most naturally corresponds to lordship over “heaven and earth” (25b) because:

(1) if πάντα were referring back to the hidden “things” (ταῦτα) in 25c, as some have argued,¹⁴⁸ the phrase ταῦτα πάντα would be most natural, and indeed is the syntactical/lexical structure Matthew uses elsewhere (cf. 6:32);¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ E.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:279; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:166; but cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:437.

¹⁴⁸ So Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:279.

(2) ταῦτα refers to Jesus’ “deeds” (11:2, 19) in the immediately preceding context, where Jesus narrates the rejection of “the Son of Man” (11:19) and “his miracles” (11:20) by those to whom he preached and for whom he performed wonders.¹⁵⁰ It is not clear what it would mean for “these things” to be “handed over” to Jesus by the Father.

(3) “All things” (πάντα) in 11:27a and “heaven and earth” (τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς) in 11:25a correspond very closely to the similar phrase in 28:18: ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς. This correspondence does not speak against Jesus’ pre-resurrection possession of all authority. Rather, just as he receives προσκύνησις proleptically throughout the narrative and then climactically so at the resurrection (28:9, 17), so also he participates in the Father’s universal lordship as the Son even in his earthly ministry.¹⁵¹ “Now” (cf. 3:15), however, he exercises that authority not as the exalted and heavenly Lord (28:18-20), but as the one who is “gentle and humble in heart” (11:28).¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ πάντα γὰρ ταῦτα τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιζητοῦσιν· οἶδεν γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος ὅτι χρῆζετε τούτων ἀπάντων. Matthew consistently specifies πάντα with the demonstrative ταῦτα when referring to an antecedent delimited by the preceding context (cf. 4.9 [!]; 6.33; 13.51, 56; 19.20; 23.36; 24.2, 8, 33, 34).

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom, Easy Yoke*, 28-9.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Donald J. Verseput, “The Role and Meaning of the ‘Son of God’ Title in Matthew’s Gospel,” *NTS* 33 (1987): 540.

¹⁵² Cf. Th. De Kruijf, *Der Sohn des Lebendigen Gottes: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie des Matthäusevangeliums* (AnBib 16; Romae: E Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1962), 74. His manner of ruling “now” as the “gentle” (πραῦς) rather than victorious king is illustrated precisely in Matthew’s removal of the phrase “triumphant and victorious” from Zech 9.9 in Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, which focuses attention on him as the “gentle” (πραῦς, 21.5) king (cf. Camille Focant, “La christologie de Matthieu à la croisée des chemins,” in *The Gospel of Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity* [ed. Donald Senior; BETL CCXLIII; Leven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2011], 85; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:118-9; Menken, *Matthew’s Bible*, 110).

(4) Jesus demonstrably exercises what is best characterized as authority over “heaven and earth” in his ministry: he is served by angels (4:11), commands creation (8:27; cf. 14:33), claims “authority” to forgive sins “on earth” (9:6), can appropriate the heavenly host at his bidding (26:53), and generally routes the powers of evil and death (11:4-5). Davies and Allison, who reject our interpretation of “all things,” nonetheless comment that in Jesus’ healing of the leper, “Even though Jesus has not yet ‘received all authority in heaven and earth’ (28:18), his ἐξουσία (cf. 7:29) is remarkable.” Later, summarizing 8:23-9:17 they say, “The power of Jesus’ divine ἐξουσία is seemingly unbounded.”¹⁵³ It is “remarkable” and “seemingly unbounded” because Jesus *does* – as the Son – possess all authority in his earthly ministry, but again, exercises it as the humble servant, not as the risen Lord (cf. 12:18-22).

(5) Further confirming the previous point, in the immediately succeeding passage (12:1-8) Jesus declares that he is “greater than the Temple” (12:6) and “Lord of the Sabbath” (12:8). These declarations that place him on par with what Israel claimed for its “Lord” make sense only in light of what he has just announced in 11:27 – the Father has handed over “all things” to him;

(6) the πάντα of 11:27a, which is “given” (παρεδόθη) to Jesus by the Father, serves as the fitting contrast to the “all these things” (ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω) Satan offered him at the temptation (4:9), namely, worldwide lordship. In

¹⁵³ *Matthew*, 2:13, 116.

11:27 Jesus is affirming that the Lordship he exercises is that which is on par with the Father's – Lordship over heaven and earth (11:25) – in contrast to the idolatrous worldly rule offered by Satan.

Also confirming the parallelism between 11:25b and 11:27a is Jesus' personal address to the Father in 25b (πάτερ), which corresponds to the personal "my father (τοῦ πατρός μου) in 27a., whereas the rest of 27 shifts to the absolute language of "the Father" and "the Son." Likewise, Jesus addresses the Father as "Lord" (κύριε, 25b) in the context of his rule over creation. Yet, the reader has observed Jesus is addressed precisely in this manner (κύριε) numerous times in the narrative, most notably in the context of his absolute power over that which was considered under the dominion of Israel's Lord – death and creation (cf., e.g. 8:2-4, 23-7; cf. 14:27-33).¹⁵⁴ Indeed, 8:23-7 is directly relevant to 11:25-7. There, the disciples cry "Lord, save/help!" (κύριε, σῶσον 8:25; cf. Ps 3:8; 6:5; 7:2; 11:2; 69:1, etc.) as they "perish" (ἀπολλύμεθα) in the chaotic waters, only to be rescued with a word by the one about whom they then ask: ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν; (8:27). In the very next passage, the demons answer: he is the Son of God (υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ, 8:29; cf. 14:33).¹⁵⁵ So also in 11:25-27, lordship over heaven and earth belongs to the one who is the filial repetition of the Father.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ 7:21, 22; 8:2, 6, 8, 21, 25; 9:28. Of course, the κύριε-address has a range of possible meanings. A fuller discussion must be delayed until chapters 4 and 5. See also the discussion of 8:2-4 below.

¹⁵⁵ That we should read 8:29 as the answer to 8:27, see chpt. 3, n. 36.

¹⁵⁶ On the language of "repetition," cf. John Webster, "Resurrection and Scripture," in *Christology and Scripture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (ed. Andrew T. Lincoln and Angus Paddison; LNTS 348; London: T. & T. Clark, 2007), 140.

11:25c with 11:27b

Matt 11:25c's declaration that the Father has hidden "these things" (ταῦτα) corresponds to 11:27b's declaration that only the Father "knows" the Son. The "these things" of which Jesus speaks, as mentioned above, refer to the preceding context wherein Jesus shifts from announcing the kingdom (κηρύσσω; 4:17, 23; 9:35; 11:1) to "reproaching" (ἤρξατο ὀνειδίζειν, 11:20) the towns in which he preached and did miracles. They rejected him (11:19) and did not repent, even in light of "his miracles" (δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ, 11:20). Despite this rejection, in 11:25 the Son "praises" (ἐξομολογοῦμαι) the Father for his eschatological reversal of common expectation (cf. 21:31-2).¹⁵⁷ The corresponding claim in 11:27 reiterates and legitimizes 11:25c. The Father alone is the one who can "reveal" (ἀπεκάλυψας, 11:25c) "these things" (i.e. the Son in his messianic ministry), because he has exclusive knowledge of the Son (καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, 11:27b).

11:26 with 11:27c

Matt 11:26 finds a significant parallel in 11:27c. There is much more to say about these verses than we have space for here, but for now we simply note that while 11:27c is the obvious counterpart to 11:27b – inasmuch as the Son has exclusive knowledge of and, therefore, exclusive authority to reveal the Father – he does this out of his sovereign will as the Son: καὶ ὃ ἐὰν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψει (11:27c). This claim about the Son's sovereign will parallels his previous statement that the Father has hidden and revealed

¹⁵⁷ As Matthew will have Jesus explain later, this "juridical hardening" was foretold in the prophets and occurred because the people refused to "see" or to "hear" (13:14-17).

(11:25c) according to what pleases him: ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου

(11:26). Father and Son participate in a mutually revelatory relationship in which each reveals the other according to his will.

It is worth reiterating that far from conflicting with Jesus' declaration in 28:18 the interpretation offered above attends closely to the movement of the narrative's time laid out in the beginning of the Gospel. John knew Jesus *already* as the "mightier one" who would bring eschatological judgment (3:11-12), and in this he was correct (cf., e.g., 25:31-46). Nonetheless, Jesus reshaped his vision of the present by identifying with Israel in undergoing baptism and declaring "now" (ἄρτι) as the time of "fulfilling all righteousness" (3:15), such that his earthly ministry would not exercise fully his authority as the "mightier" one, but as the obedient Son and servant (cf. 4:1-11; 12:18-21).¹⁵⁸ It is

¹⁵⁸ Likewise, during his ministry he forbids others from making known his true identity (12:16), but at the resurrection he explicitly commands the disciples to go forth in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (28:19). Two related texts deserve further comment. One might point to Matt 20:23 or 24:36 to argue that the Son does not share all with the Father. Those verses—especially 24:36—have of course been the topic of much debate in the history of the Church. Those verses, however, fit well both within Matthew's paternal-filial grammar we have briefly traced here as well as within a trinitarian grammar that retains the distinction between the *relations* of the persons of the Godhead (see the fuller discussion of Matthew's paternal-filial idiom in chpt. 5 below). In Matthew's grammar, though the Son shares all with the Father, his relation to the Father *as Son* is not thereby obliterated. The Son trusts the Father to exalt him and does not take the prerogative of exaltation upon himself; the Father "gifts" (παράδοθῃ [11:27], ἐδόθῃ [28:18]) all to the Son, and it is the Father's prerogative to exalt his Son and to establish his kingdom (cf. 25:34). Such logic is at work in 20:23, wherein the Son defers to his Father's authority in establishing those who sit next to his throne (the paternal-filial language is unique to Matthew: "...prepared *by my Father*" [cp. Mark 10:40]). Matt 24:36 is likewise embedded in a larger discourse about the Son's climactic, public revelation as universal King and Judge ("that day" of v. 36 is the Son of Man's "parousia" [24:37], when he "comes in glory" and "sits on his glorious throne" as "King" over those "blessed *by my Father*" [25:31-34]). Trouble—theologically speaking—with 24:36 results from de-coupling it both from that larger context in which it is embedded as well as from Matthew's broader theological grammar. Matt 24:36-25:46, that is, depends deeply on the paternal-filial logic that pervades the narrative. The Son—who is *above* the angels (24:36)—does not usurp the Father's prerogative in bringing human history to a close *precisely in the public display of his Son's universal sovereignty*. A proper discussion would explore all of these elements in detail. Nonetheless, we note, for example, that in 24:36-25:46 Matthew christologically appropriates OT imagery for YHWH (esp. the "day of the Lord," e.g., 24:42), combines it with the imagery of the glorious Son of Man in Daniel 7 (e.g., Matt 25:31-32), and modulates all of that into his paternal-filial key (24:36; 25:34). Matt 24:36-25:46 thus brings to expression the unity-in-distinction of Father and Son as "Lord" of all. Relatedly, one should also note the christologically determined narrative time we traced above. Matt

only after his completed obedience to the Father that he is vindicated and exercises that authority which is inherent to him as the Son.¹⁵⁹

VII. Conclusion

The upshot of the mutually-interpretive web of Matthew's προσκυνέω language to this point in our discussion is that it takes shape around the grammar of universal lordship shared by Father and Son. Jesus refuses Satan's request to "worship" him precisely because Israel confesses that there is one Lord and God, and he is Lord of heaven and earth. As such, he alone receives Israel's worship. Yet, strikingly, at three distinct points the narrative asserts the Son's full participation in the Father's universal Lordship. As we argued above, in chapters 1 and 2 Jesus shares in the Father's Lordship through "saving" the "people" who belong both to him and to the Father (1:21; 2:6) as well as through his reception of "worship" from the nations (2:11); in 11:25-27 Jesus is said to have received "all things" from the Father; in 28:16-20 he is declared Lord of heaven and earth. He, too, therefore, rightly receives "worship." More to the point, the language of "worship" – concentrated as it is on the theme of Lordship in which Father

24:36 occurs, that is, during the Son's voluntary "state of humiliation." In that state, the Son defers to the Father's will (26:39, 42), refuses to use his authority for his own gain (26:53; cf. 4:1-11), and must wonder at the Father's abandonment of him at the cross (27:46). Likewise, in that state the time of the Father's final vindication of his Son remains hidden from him (24:36). As the faithful and obedient son, fulfilling what Israel failed to do, he must *trust* his Father.

¹⁵⁹ This same sort of christological movement can be seen at several other points in the New Testament. Luke can refer to Jesus as (already being) "Lord" throughout the Gospel narrative, yet also says that he was "made Lord and Christ" at his exaltation (Acts 2:33-6; cf. C. Kevin Rowe, "Acts 2.36 and the Continuity of Lukan Christology," *NTS* 53 [2007]: 37-56). So also Paul refers to Jesus as the Son in a pre-temporal manner (cf. Rom 8:32; Gal 4:4; Phil 2:6-11; cf. 1 Cor 8:6) and yet can speak of him as appointed/declared "Son of God" at his resurrection (Rom. 1:4). Though these texts (Acts 2:36; Rom. 1:4) are hotly debated, reading them as a coherent piece within the narrative structure of their authors' overall arguments requires that they not be seen as "primitive exaltation Christologies," but as fitting into an argument for the Father's vindication of the one who already in his earthly and (at least for Paul) pre-temporal life was Lord/Son.

and Son mutually participate – binds together their identity in such a way as to set them over against all other reality. As the filial repetition of the Father, the Son rules as Lord and receives the unique worship given to him. As a result, in these passages we have discussed – and as we will continue to see – Matthew’s narrative pressures the reader to articulate the identity of the “Lord God” (4:10) in a way that includes the Son.

To argue as we have in this chapter is, in some ways, to have anticipated already our fuller argument. Grasping the significance of Matthew’s first two uses of προσκυνέω required interacting with Matthew’s pervasive “intratextuality,” which Matthew commonly exploits to expand and enrich the reader’s perception of discrete episodes. As we turn to the remaining uses of προσκυνέω in the body of the narrative, we will see how such intratextuality (along with many other literary features) continues to shape the reader’s articulation of Matthew’s theological grammar. To return to Riffaterre’s language, we will see in the next chapter that the “ungrammaticality” between 2:1-12 and 4:8-10 is intensified as Matthew continues to employ προσκυνέω in christologically provocative ways.

CHAPTER 3

Προσκυνέω in the Body of the Narrative

I. Introduction

To this point we have sought to listen to how the narrative employs the language of προσκυνέω in the literary frame of the Gospel and in the introduction of Jesus' messianic ministry. We have argued that the resonances between the magi-temptation-resurrection narratives, of which προσκυνέω is a key ingredient, serve to bind together the identity of Father and Son, particularly around the issue of "worship."

We now turn to the other five uses of προσκυνέω in the narrative – 8:2, 9:18, 14:33, 15:25, 20:20 – all of which have Jesus as their object. We will see that these various episodes continue to intensify the "ungrammaticality" we observed between 2:1-12 and 4:8-10; the exclusive προσκύνησις due to Israel's κύριος ὁ θεός is re-molded around the filial κύριος.

Mark Allan Powell has provided a helpful typology of Matthew's worship language that we will use to organize the following discussion. Four of the remaining instances of προσκυνέω occur in what he calls "supplicatory worship" – an individual comes to Jesus with a need or request, and in doing so renders him προσκύνησις (8:2, 9:18, 15:25, 20:20).¹ Matt 14:33 is the one exception and corresponds more closely to what Powell calls "epiphanic worship" – a response to a "manifestation of divine presence"² – in which he includes 2:1-12 and 28:9, 17. We will discuss 14:33 and its narrative-christological role separately in chapter 4.

¹ "A Typology of Worship in the Gospel of Matthew," *JSNT* 57 (1995): 6.

² *Ibid.*, 14.

This heuristic schema is helpful inasmuch as it highlights the christologically-determined narrative “time” we discussed earlier. In all but one instance (14:33) in the main body of Matthew’s narrative, all who approach Jesus in προσκύνησις do so in a manner that corresponds to his vocation as the servant who binds up the wounds of Israel (e.g. 8:17; 12:18-22). Unlike 2:1-12, 14:33, and 28:9, 17, in these instances Jesus is not “worshiped” because of who he is as the “king of the Jews” (2:2), the “Son of God” (14:33), or risen Lord/Son (28:9, 17-19), but he is humbly entreated as one who has demonstrated power to heal the sick and lame (e.g., 4:23-25).

As a result, a number of scholars argue that the meaning of προσκυνέω in these passages carries no weighty christological significance, because in such situations “it represents the conventionally deferential posture of a suppliant to someone of recognized authority whose help is sought....The word itself does not imply the recognition of the one approached as divine.”³ As with our discussion of the magi’s visit, a form of this interpretation may be true at the level of the characters in the story; their actions *as characters* are ambiguous and need not connote “worship.”

On the discourse level, however, we will argue that interpreting προσκυνέω as “supplication” or “homage” is insufficient. It neither accounts for the numerous christologically significant details Matthew has woven into each passage nor how the entire narrative positions the reader hermeneutically to hear a more christologically

³ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 303; cf. Peter Head, *Christology and the Synoptic Problem* (SNTSMS 94; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 130; Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT 1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006), 200. See also the discussion of Karen Jobes’ article in the Introduction (“Distinguishing the Meaning of Greek Verbs in the Semantic Domain for Worship,” *Filología Neotestamentaria* 4 [1991]: 183-9). As we argued there, “words themselves” never actually “imply” one thing or another.

momentous connotation in the use of προσκυνέω in these passages. That is, as discussed in the Introduction, there is a heavy dose of dramatic irony at play in each of these passages. As we will see, whether the character realizes it or not, Matthew has narrated these accounts in a way that remolds Israel's worship christologically, and in so doing, binds together the human life of the Son with the identity of Israel's κύριος.⁴

II. Matt 8:2-4 – The Worshipping Leper

When we arrive at the healing of the leper in 8:2-4, the narrative has just provided the first of the five well-known markers that break the story into a sequence of discourse and narrative: Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους (7:28).⁵ As often in Matthew, the narrative that follows the preceding discourse both illustrates that discourse in some way and picks up where the narrative previously left off. In the healing of the leper, the theme of healing is picked up from 4:25. Davies and Allison – along with

⁴ It is important to note that a number of scholars explain Matthew's use of προσκυνέω in a "two-level" way as well, but rather differently from what I do below. Peter Head, as we saw in the Introduction, argues that "there is insufficient evidence to establish that [προσκυνέω] was a Christologically loaded expression [for Matthew]," and cites with approval Eugene Lemcio's argument that προσκυνέω means "more than reverence but less than worship" for Matthew (though what this means exactly remains unclear in Head's argument). He goes on to say, however, that "even if not at the time of Matthew's writing at least by the turn of the first century, Christian readers would have accepted the worship of Jesus as divine and would have then appreciated the significance of Matthew's record." Finally, he adds in passing that Matthew may be "cleverly exploiting an ambiguity inherent within his chosen terminology," though this claim would seem to contradict his more definitive statement about "insufficient evidence" (*Christology and the Synoptic Problem*, 130-31). The effect of such an argument is to abstract προσκυνέω from Matthew's narrative and posit an extra "meaning" that resides either in Matthew's mind or in the life of the (later) Christian community, but which gains no real traction in the articulation of Matthew's narrative christology, precisely because the story as the "meaning determining discourse" is notably underrepresented. My argument, however, will be that Matthew embeds προσκυνέω in broader linguistic patterns that necessitate a "double" hearing, the neglect of which impoverishes one's grasp of Jesus' identity in Matthew (for readings similar to Head's, see also, e.g., D. A. Carson, "Matthew" in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew and Mark* [rev. ed.; eds. Tremper Longman III & David E. Garland; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010], 116; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13* [WBC 33A; Dallas: Word Books, 1993], 28, 198).

⁵ Cf. Dale Allison, "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*," in idem, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 137-8.

a number of other commentators – argue that it is placed here “primarily because of the reference to what Moses commanded Jesus did not come to do away with Moses (5:17-19).” They likewise emphasize the Mosaic typology at work in the passage.⁶

While it is likely that the healing of the leper demonstrates narratively Jesus’ unwillingness to “abolish” the law of Moses (5:17), this explanation only goes so far, and the “primary” accent of the passage, I will argue, falls elsewhere. This can be seen from (1) its immediately preceding context in the Sermon on the Mount, which prepares the reader for 8:2-4, (2) Matthew’s changes to Mark’s text, (3) the structure of the passage, and (4) the cryptic ending. Each of these factors points to the further demonstration of the dawning of the kingdom through the eschatological revelation of the Father in the filial κύριος. Within this matrix the προσκύνησις rendered to Jesus by the leper becomes – for the reader – another point of contact with the previous two instances and thereby acquires further christological significance. We will discuss each point in turn.

Literary Context for 8:2-4

Though often ignored, the literary context most relevant and illuminating for the healing of the leper is the ending of the Sermon on the Mount, which directly precedes the healing and is thus the most recent narrative material in the reader’s purview.⁷ Importantly, the end of the Sermon takes a decisively eschatological and christological

⁶ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988-97), 2:9-10; cf. also Joachim Gnllka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (2 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 1:297; Hubert Frankemölle, *Matthäus Kommentar* (2 vols.; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994), 1:300.

⁷ On account of the shift from discourse to narrative, with surprising frequency commentators largely ignore how the end of the SM supplies the appropriate contextual clues for interpreting 8:2-4.

turn. It moves away from the main theme of a new “law” for the community (summed up in 7:12)⁸ and into several new, though related, topics: warnings about false prophets and entering the kingdom (7:13-20), Jesus’ definitive role at the final judgment (7:21-23), the embodiment of the Father’s will in Jesus’ teaching (7:24-27, with 7:21), and Jesus’ authority over against the scribes’ (7:28-8:1). Though we cannot deal here with all of the interpretive details of 7:13-8:1, we will highlight several of the new and significant christological features that prepare for one’s hearing of 8:2-4.

In 7:21-23 we encounter for the first time a web of christological nomenclature and themes that deepen Matthew’s portrait of Jesus’ identity while drawing on the foregoing narrative. First, Jesus’ central role in the final judgment, initially hinted at in 3:11-12, is here further expounded. Those who have failed to live according to his Father’s will/Jesus’ words (7:21, 24) will be rejected. Importantly, only a few verses earlier, in 7:19, it appears to be the Father who cuts down and throws into the fire, as is stated also in 3:10 (cf. also 15:13).⁹ Likewise, in 22:13, it is the Father who rejects those who do not belong to his Son’s banquet, and casts them out into the place of weeping and gnashing of teeth (22:2, 13). Here in 7:21-23, however, the Son is described as deciding the fate of sinners in the same language used for the Father (cf. also 13:41-2; 24:51; 25:32). The ease and frequency with which Matthew moves between Father and Son as Judge – in some cases with the Father judging those who reject the Son (e.g. 22:2, 13)

⁸ Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* (3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress), 1:366; Graham Stanton, “Interpreting the Sermon on the Mount,” in *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 303-4.

⁹ The “divine passive” in each instance almost surely indicates the Father as the agent; cf. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 184; Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (THNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 95.

and in others the Son rejecting those who fail to do the Father's will (7:21) – sets them together over again the rest of the created order, which stands under judgment.

Second, and closely related to the previous point, we see in 7:21 the first address of Jesus as κύριε. As scholars have noted for some time, the double plea to Jesus as κύριε here in the context of eschatological judgment not only recalls pleas to YHWH in the OT (e.g., Ps 108:21 LXX), but also the early Christian confession of Jesus as Lord.¹⁰ The christological significance of the κύριε address is strengthened by what follows in verse 22 – the significance of Jesus' name – which leads to our third point.

Third, then, the address to Jesus as “Lord, Lord” in 7:21 and then again in 7:22, followed by the thrice-repeated and emphatically-placed “in your name” (τῷ ὀνόματι),¹¹ adds a christological dimension to the narrative first highlighted in 1:21 – the significance of Jesus' name. Though we will say more about the narrative's use of Jesus' “name” in chapter 4, we can note here that it takes on decidedly YHWH-like characteristics, functioning much as the divine name functions in the OT.¹²

Fourth, 7:21 is the first of Jesus' many references in Matthew to the Father as “my Father” (τοῦ πατρός μου). Again, we will discuss this in more detail later, but we can note initially the striking contrast this personal reference to the Father makes with the repeated emphasis on “your father” (τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν) throughout the Sermon on the Mount. Fifteen times Matthew uses the word πατήρ in the SM. The first fourteen (!) are

¹⁰ Cf., e.g., France, *Matthew*, 292 n. 25. Again, of course, κύριος/κύριε has a wide semantic range. On the multivalence of “Lord!” (κύριε), see below.

¹¹ In each instance the prepositional phrase is placed before the verb.

¹² Cf., e.g., Larry Hurtado, “Pre-70 CE Jewish Opposition to Christ-Devotion,” *JTS* 50.1 (1999): 39; Simon J. Gathercole, *The Pre-Existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 65-8.

all related to the disciples (13 “your”; 1 “our”). The last – τοῦ πατρὸς μου (7:21) – is therefore significant (1) rhetorically as the final instance of father language in the SM, (2) in its distinction from all previous uses of father-language (“my” vs. “your/our”), and (3) structurally in that it concludes the sermon, providing the theological warrant for what Jesus has preached.

Further, Jesus proceeds to claim that “my Father’s will” (7:21) is embodied in his words (μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους, 7:24).¹³ The logic re-invokes Jesus’ filial identity – the Father’s will finds perfect expression in Jesus because he is the Son. By closing the Sermon with an emphasis on his unique Sonship/Lordship and articulation of the Father’s will (7:21-4), Jesus not only sets up a qualitative contrast between his Sonship and that of his disciples – recalling the infancy and baptism narratives – but also grounds his disciples’ sonship in his own.¹⁴ To be a child of the Father is to do the Father’s will as taught (and lived) by the Son, or as Cuvillier puts it, “Cela [7:21] signifie que, pour le disciple, la paternité de Dieu n’est accessible que par le status filial de Jésus.”¹⁵

Fifth, and finally, the narrative transitions from the SM to the healing of the leper with important descriptive and evaluative comments from the narrator. We hear that the crowds “were amazed” (ἐξεπλήσσοντο) on account of Jesus’ teaching, because, ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν (7:28-9). This is the

¹³ Note the emphatic μου.

¹⁴ Cf. William L. Kynes, *A Christology of Solidarity: Jesus as the Representative of His People in Matthew* (Boston: University of America, 1991), 93. Cf. also the insightful comments of Elian Cuvillier, *Naissance et enfance d’un Dieu: Jésus Christ dans l’évangile de Matthieu* (Paris: Bayard, 2005), 108-11.

¹⁵ Cuvillier, *Naissance*, 111; Cf. also Salvador Villota, “‘La Perfección del Padre’ en los Hijos: Estudio Contextual de Mt 5,48,” in “*Perché stessero con Lui*,” *Scritti in onore di Klemens Stock SJ, nel suo 75° compleanno* (Roma: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2012), 111-12, 120-21. Note also the very similar christologically-centered ending at the end of Jesus’ second discourse that binds together the Father and the Son: Ὁ δεχόμενος ὑμᾶς ἐμὲ δέχεται, καὶ ὁ ἐμὲ δεχόμενος δέχεται τὸν ἀποστεῖλάντά με (10:40; cf. Graham Stanton, “Matthew as a Creative Interpreter of the Sayings of Jesus,” in *A Gospel for a New People*, 335).

first explicit mention of Jesus’ “authority,” a christological theme carried through the rest of the narrative (e.g., 9:6; 10:1; 21:23), which, again, turns on his filial relation to the Father (11:27; 21:23/22:41-46;¹⁶ 28:16-20). The authority Jesus displays already in his earthly ministry – articulated in 7:28 – reinforces an important christological point we made above: Jesus proleptically wields the authority he will inherit because of *who* he is – the Emmanuel, the Son who shares “all” with his Father and who “saves his people from their sins” (1:21).¹⁷ Moreover, it sets the stage for the first healing Matthew narrates in detail, the healing of the leper.

While the crowds’ marveling at his “authority” here in 7:28 recalls Jesus’ various pronouncements throughout the Sermon (e.g., 5:22, 28; 7:21, 24), the pregnant phrase about the “scribes” – οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς αὐτῶν – recalls for the reader the already-existing tension between Jesus and Herod/Jerusalem/the scribes: καὶ συναγαγὼν πάντας τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς τοῦ λαοῦ ἐπυνθάνετο παρ’ αὐτῶν ποῦ ὁ χριστὸς γεννᾶται (2:4). The effect of “their scribes” in 7:29 is to re-activate and reinforce a fundamental issue raised in 1:21, 2:4-6 (cf. 21:23; 26:3, 47), viz., the christological reshaping of the people of God (e.g., 10:32-3, 37-40; 21:23, etc.).¹⁸ What remains as amazement for the

¹⁶ See our discussion of these passages in chapter 5.

¹⁷ For Matthew, “salvation” includes not only Jesus’ obedient death and resurrection, but his ministry of teaching and healing as well (7:24-27; 8:17). Cf. Warren Carter, “‘To save his people from their sins’ (Matt 1:21): Rome’s Empire and Matthew’s Salvation as Sovereignty,” in *SBL Seminar Papers, 2000* (SBLSP 39; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000); Richard Beaton, *Isaiah’s Christ in Matthew’s Gospel* (SNTSMS 123; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 110-119; Robert H. Gundry, “Salvation in Matthew,” in *The Old is Better: New Testament Essays in Support of Traditional Interpretations* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

¹⁸ Who, exactly, constitutes the people of God in Matthew is a much debated issue within Matthean studies, which we cannot explore here. I am persuaded that Matthew by no means rejects Israel as a people group in favor of offering the Gospel to Gentiles. He does, however, consider anyone, Jew or Gentile, who rejects Jesus as Messiah, to have forfeited their place in the people of God (cf. Donald A. Hagner, “Matthew: Christian Judaism or Jewish Christianity?” in *The Face of New Testament Studies: A Survey of Recent Research* [eds. Scot McKnight and Grant R. Osborne; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004], esp. 270-78;

crowd in their first encounter with Jesus – and what will soon be asked explicitly by the disciples (8:27) and Jesus’ hometown (13:54-6) – the reader already knows. He has this authority because he is the Son of the Father, anointed by the Spirit.

Changes to Mark/Structuring of the passage

If the Sermon on the Mount displays Jesus’ authority in word, chapters 8-9 display his authority in deeds,¹⁹ of which the healing of the leper is the introduction. We noted above that a number of scholars think Matthew has shifted Mark’s placement of this passage in order to highlight Jesus’ continuity with the law of Moses (8:4; cf. 5:17).²⁰ While 8:4 may indeed have this effect, reading 8:2-4 in light of our discussion of the end of the SM suggests that the healing of the leper continues narratively where the SM left off; it highlights Jesus’ unique authority, putting him at the center of the kingdom he announces through his eschatological reinterpretation of the law of Moses to which his followers must be faithful (7:24ff), typified in his repeated phrase, ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν (5:22, etc.). Matthew’s redactional changes to Mark further support such an interpretation.

also, Donald Verseput, *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King: A Study of the Composition of Matthew 11-12* [Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986], 295-300).

¹⁹ The parallel summaries at the beginning and end of chapters 5-9 (4:23-5; 9:35-8) indicate that the intervening material is to be read together. Grundmann says 4:23 and 9:35 “eine Conclusio entsteht. . . . Entsprechend der doppelten Thematik von 4,23 gliedert Matthäus das Wirken des Christus auf in sein Wirken durch das Wort (5,3-7,27) und, übergeleitet durch 7,28.29, in sein Wirken durch die Tat (8,1-9,34)” (*Matthäus*, 110); cf. Also Heinz Joachim Held, “Matthew as Interpreter of the Miracle Stories,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 246.

²⁰ Moving it before the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law (cf. Mark 1:29-34; 1:40-45; cf. Luke 5:12-14).

First, we turn to a number of additions/changes Matthew has made to Mark's text that function to resonate with earlier points in the narrative, most particularly, the visit of the magi. The chart below highlights the similarities:

Matt 2:1-2, 11	Matt 8:2, 4
ἰδοὺ μάγοι ἀπὸ ἀνατολῶν παρεγένοντο . . . λέγοντες	ἰδοὺ λεπρὸς προσελθὼν προσεκύνει . . . λέγων
ἤλθομεν προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ (v.2)/ἐλθόντες . . . πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ (v.11)	προσελθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ. . .
προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα	προσένεγκον τὸ δῶρον ὃ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς

From the parallels above, we can see that the magi's visit is not only evoked through the mention of "their scribes" (7:29/2:4), as we discussed earlier, but through extensive verbal and syntactical parallels, some of which have occurred only in these two places to this point in the narrative. In the first parallel, Matthew has re-arranged Mark's syntax of the Leper's approach to match that of the magi, and added the particle "behold." This construction – "behold" + the naming of the subject who approaches Jesus + "saying" – arrests the reader's attention both with catchword "behold" and by fronting the (surprising) identity of the one approaching.²¹ It thus creates an initial link between

²¹ Taking the subject's placement in front of the verb as emphatic, cf. F. A. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. Robert W. Funk; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), §472; Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* (2d ed.; Dallas: SIL International, 2000), 1-67; cf. Mark 1:40: ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς, which reflects "standard" word order.

the magi and the leper in their identities as unexpected participants in the people of God.²²

The link between the leper and the magi is deepened with Matthew's addition of προσκυνέω to Mark's description of the leper's approach,²³ along with using the participial form of προσέρχομαι.²⁴ More, Matthew's literary arrangement is highly suggestive. Matthew appears to use προσκυνέω christologically for initial and paradigmatic encounters: (1) the magi, the first to encounter Jesus publicly, render him προσκύνησις, which sets the literary-christological trajectory we are tracing;²⁵ (2) the healing of the leper is the first healing recorded in detail, and it is the first in a series of three healings, the other two of which do not use προσκυνέω; (3) as we will see later, Matthew uses προσκυνέω in the disciples' first confession of Jesus as "Son of God" (14:33);²⁶ (4) as noted in chapter 2, the first witnesses to the risen Jesus render him προσκύνησις (28:9, 17). Προσκυνέω thus serves, rather literally, as a christological *Leitwort* – to encounter Jesus rightly is to render him προσκύνησις.

Returning more specifically to the connection between 8:2-4 and 2:1-12, Matthew's careful verbal, syntactical, and literary paralleling of the magi/leper accounts

²² Matthew repeats this stylized pattern for others who approach Jesus in humility who would be unanticipated beneficiaries of the kingdom (cf., e.g., 9:18, 20; 15:22; cf. 20:30). Cf. Schlatter's apropos comments that connect the healing of the leper with the following pericope about the centurion: "Beide [the leper and Centurion] stehen jenseits der heiligen Gemeinde, und beide waren nicht durch jüdische Willkür, sondern durch das Gesetz von ihr getrennt" (Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbständigkeit* [Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948], 269).

²³ There is a text-critical issue in Mark 1:40 on whether or not it originally contained the phrase καὶ γονυπετῶν. Regardless, Matthew has either changed καὶ γονυπετῶν to προσκυνέω or added the notion himself. Note also, Luke 5:12: πεσὼν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον.

²⁴ Cf. Mark 1:40: ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρῶς.

²⁵ Cf. D. Johannes Horst, *Proskynein: Zur Anbetung im Urschristentum nach ihrer religionsgeschichtlichen Eigenart* (NTF 3/2; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1932), 209.

²⁶ As we will explore below, he again introduces the first of a series of healings with προσκυνέω (9:18), while in the other healings he does not use the term.

suggests that we read them as “narrative analogies,” as mutually-illuminative moments for an important literary motif.²⁷ The magi and leper share (1) the commonality of being “outsiders” who are being incorporated into a people centered on Jesus, (2) the same christologically-loaded approach and response to him, and (3) a literary prioritization that places them at key transition moments in the narrative.²⁸ These latter two points are particularly germane at this juncture in the narrative, since the most recent instance of προσκυνέω occurred in Jesus’ mouth with reference to the Father (4:8-10). That is, the literary “ungrammaticality” created by Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 2:1-12 and 4:8-10 is here re-activated – once again Jesus is receiving προσκύνησις. Indeed, noticing this potential discrepancy, Fiedler says, “Selbstverständlich unterscheidet sich für Mt diese Huldigung, die in Jesus, von dem die Erzählungen sprechen, dem auferweckten Christus, dem Erhöhten gelten, von der Anbetung, die Gott allein gebührt.”²⁹ It is not, I would argue, quite so “selbstverständlich.”

There are, in fact, more reasons in the passage to suggest that the Father and Son mutually participate in the same προσκύνησις of their people than Fiedler has realized. First, by reading the leper’s approach in concert with the magi’s visit, the reader is brought back to all of the christological significance of that passage (see our argument

²⁷ On “narrative analogies,” see the helpful discussion in Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark’s Gospel* (JSNTSup 102; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 36-40; cf. also David Rhoads, et. al. on “type scenes,” a subset of narrative analogies (*Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel* [3d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012], 51).

²⁸ In light of these parallels, the claim that the tense in which προσκυνέω occurs determines the difference between “worship” (aorist, 2:11; 14:33; 28:9, 27) and “supplication” (imperfect, 8:2; 9:18; etc.) is probably too fine a distinction (cf., e.g., William G. Thompson, *Matthew’s Advice to a Divided Community: Mt. 17,22-18,35* [AnBib 44; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970], 214 n.62). As Powell (“A Typology of Worship”) has rightly argued, both fall under the broad category of “worship,” while in their respective contexts they connote a certain kind of worship.

²⁹ *Matthäusevangelium*, 200; cf. also David Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God’s People in the First Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 226-7.

above), not least the Father's providential guidance of the magi to his Son so that they might "fall down" and render him προσκύνησις.

Second, though an argument from silence, is what is noticeably *lacking* in the passage compared to the common refusal tradition noted above in our survey of early Jewish literature. As an infant Jesus could not – of course – refuse the προσκύνησις of the magi. In light of 4:8-10, however, one would expect at 8:2-4 something on Jesus lips like that found on Peter's: ἀνάστηθι· καὶ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπός εἰμι (Acts 10:26; cf. Rev 19:10; 22:9). At least, if the narrative indeed sought to distinguish between "worship" offered to the Father and "homage" offered to the Son, we would not expect Matthew to have *added* to Mark's wording precisely in a way that creates potential confusion in light of 4:8-10.

More telling is the closest OT parallel, which nearly all commentators read as an appropriate intertext to this passage – the healing of Naaman's leprosy through the prophet Elisha in 2 Kings 5:1-19. Repeatedly, the passage emphasizes that it is Israel's *God*, through Elijah's prophetic agency, who heals Naaman (5:3, 7, 8, 11, 14, 16, 17-19). God's ultimate agency is especially clear in Naaman's climactic pronouncement: ἰδοὺ δὴ ἔγνωκα ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ ὅτι ἀλλ' ἢ ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ (5:15).³⁰ 2 Kings' intense focus on YHWH's power differs markedly from Matt 8:2-4, since in Matthew's account the power to heal is centered decidedly in Jesus (see below). The passage does not support Carter's more nebulous assessment that – as through Elisha – "God is able to

³⁰ הנהגה ידעתי כי אין אלהים בכל־הארץ כי אם־בישראל

heal [the leprosy]” through Jesus as “God’s agent.”³¹ Rather, Gnllka more aptly summarizes:

Man darf für die Überlieferung der Geschichte einen Einfluß von 2 Kg 5,8-15, der Erzählung von der Heilung Naamans vom Aussatz durch den Propheten Elischa, vermuten. Die Jesus-Geschichte soll diese dann überbieten. . . . Darüberhinaus [2 Kg. 5.11] heilt Jesus ohne Anrufung Gottes, aus eigenem Willen. Das machtvolle “Ich will” greift die Bitte auf: “Wenn du willst . . .”³²

Third, as stated above, Matthew’s addition of προσκυνέω evokes not only the visit of the magi, but the temptation narrative, which Fielder (above) and many others rightly note. The evocation, however, is intensified christologically by a further Matthean addition to Mark’s account – the Leper’s address to Jesus:

<p>Matt 8:2</p> <p>προσελθὼν <u>προσεκύνει</u> αὐτῷ λέγων· <u>κύριε</u>, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι.</p>	<p>Matt 4:10</p> <p><u>κύριον</u> τὸν θεόν σου <u>προσκυνήσεις</u></p>
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The Leper’s address of Jesus as κύριε is striking for several reasons, all of which controverts the commonly-found argument that κύριος in the vocative should not be considered christologically significant.³³ First, as can be seen from the parallel above,

³¹ Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 199.

³² *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:296. The contrast with the one other account of healing a leper in the OT – Miriam – is instructive as well. There, Aaron speaks to Moses in a manner similar to the leper’s address to Jesus: δέομαι κύριε μὴ συνεπιθῇ ἡμῖν ἁμαρτίαν διότι ἡγνοήσαμεν καθότι ἡμάρτομεν (12:11). But Moses then turns to *God*: καὶ ἐβόησεν Μωυσῆς πρὸς κύριον λέγων ὁ θεός δέομαί σου ἴασαι αὐτήν (12:13).

³³ Cf., e.g., C. F. D. Moule, *The Origin of Christology* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 35. Even those who argue that for Matthew κύριε signifies more than polite address often point to 27:63 as an example of his more “mundane” use of the term (e.g. Kingsbury, “The Title ‘Kyrios’ in Matthew’s Gospel,” *JBL* 94 [1975]: 248). This, however, passes over too quickly the deep irony in the Jewish leaders’ address of Pilate as κύριε, since throughout the narrative they have *refused* to address Jesus as such. As with προσκυνέω, however, our interpretation of the κύριε-address is not meant to run blithely over the various levels of reading facilitated by the narrative. The κύριε-address of course bears historical verisimilitude in that it need not be more than respectful address to a superior. Nonetheless, we are arguing

Matthew's addition not only of προσκυνέω, but also of κύριε to Mark's version creates a distinctive literary link with 4:10, where Jesus asserts that προσκύνῃς is reserved for the one who is κύριος. The convergence of Matthew's changes to both of these passages – of φοβέω to προσκυνέω in 4:10 (cf. Deut. 6:13/10:12) and his addition of προσκυνέω and κύριος to Mark's healing of the leper – once again creates a literary resonance between 4:10 and a christologically provocative passage (as with 2:11). Second, the simple fact that Matthew has added κύριος to Mark's account *prima facie* suggests it plays a particularly important christological role here. Third, this is the first time in the narrative Jesus is addressed as such by an outsider, further suggesting its import. Fourth, in relation to three, κύριε also recalls Jesus' recent words at the end of the SM (see above), where he referred to himself for the first time as "Lord" and God as "my father" (7:21). The close linking of Jesus as "Lord" and "Son" in relation to the "Father," who is also "Lord," is a decisive christological theme the narrative will develop in order to unite Father and Son in identity and purpose.³⁴ The clustering of these terms (κύριος, πατήρ μου) in this section precludes one from taking κύριε in 8:2 merely as polite address.³⁵ Rather, it carries with it the echoes of its literary context, where Jesus is the eschatological "Lord" who decides the fate of those who appeal to him. The paternal

that on the discourse level Matthew has used the κύριε-address as an important aspect of a much larger and indeed central concern in his story of Jesus (see chpt 5 below).

³⁴ Esp. 22:42-6. We will discuss this phenomenon in chapter 5 (but cf. Kingsbury, "The Title 'Kyrios' in Matthew's Gospel," 250; Versepunt, "The Role and Meaning of the 'Son of God' Title in Matthew's Gospel," *NTS* 33 [1987]: 539).

³⁵ An interpretation opted for by, e.g., Head (*Christology and the Synoptic Problem*, 165-9).

κύριος who is to be “worshiped” in 4:10 finds his filial counterpart in 8:2, who shares in that προσκύνησις.³⁶

Turning to another detail, the leper’s theologically-loaded request reinforces our interpretation of his address of Jesus as κύριε. As noted above, his address centers on Jesus’ power to heal him: ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι (8:2). Many Matthean scholars have commented on the trust the leper places in Jesus’ “will” (8:2), of which Nolland is representative: “The will of Jesus is being set on par with that of God.”³⁷ Gnulka further comments, “Die Heilung vom Aussatz wurde der Auferweckung vom Tode gleichgewertet,”³⁸ the truth of which is reflected in the king’s response in 2 Kings 5:7: μὴ θεὸς ἐγὼ τοῦ θανατῶσαι καὶ ζωοποιῆσαι ὅτι οὗτος ἀποστέλλει πρὸς με ἀποσυνάξαι ἄνδρα ἀπὸ τῆς λέπρας αὐτοῦ;³⁹ Power over life and death, to heal leprosy, resided in the sovereign will of Israel’s God (cf., e.g., Deut 32:39; Wis 16:13; Sir 11:14), which he *could* enact through prophetic agents (notably, Elijah and Elisha). The contrast

³⁶ I use “filial” language here even though it is not explicitly mentioned in this passage, because, as noted above, Jesus’ filial identity is intricately woven into the concluding logic of the SM, which sets the context for the healing of the leper. Further, Jesus’ divine-filial identity is that which unveils the logic of his reception of “worship” (e.g., 14:33). At this juncture I can only assert this latter point of interpretation, but I will treat this topic fully in chapters 4 and 5. Human characters in the narrative address Jesus by all manner of epithets, but when the Father and supernatural beings address him, they speak what the reader recognizes from his infancy – he is Son of God. The two accounts that follow the three healings in 8:1-17 illustrate this point. When the disciples encounter the power of Jesus over the wind and waves, they ask, ποταπὸς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν; (8:27). The narrative supplies the answer just two verses later, along with a touch of irony – the demon possessed men run up to Jesus and know exactly who he is: τί ἡμῖν καὶ σοί, υἱὲ τοῦ θεοῦ; (8:29). Also, the repetition of a sea miracle in 14:22-33, which recalls that of 8:23-27 and (unlike Mark) climaxes with the disciples “worshiping” Jesus and declaring him “Son of God” (θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ, 14:33) reinforces this interpretation. Matt 8:27 and 8:29 are to be read together – the disciples ask, and, ironically, the demons answer.

³⁷ John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 349.

³⁸ *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:296.

³⁹ Reflected also in rabbinic tradition; cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:11.

here, as Chrysostom noted long ago, is that the leper appeals not to God through Jesus, but to Jesus' sovereign "will."⁴⁰

Jesus' power is further emphasized in the way in which Matthew has significantly abbreviated Mark's account, the effect of which is to highlight the dialogue and action that focuses on the thrice-repeated word "clean" and Jesus' willingness to effect that cleansing:

A. λεπρὸς προσελθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων·

B. κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι.

X. καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἥψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων·

B.' θέλω, καθαρίσθητι

A.' καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα

The structuring above attempts to display the flow of the main part of the pericope, which alternates between action and dialogue, having been introduced by a general comment (8:1) and then concluding with Jesus' instructions to the one healed (8:4). The interaction opens by stressing the "leper," and closes with equal stress on the resolution of his "leprosy." In between the inclusio of "leper/leprosy" is the appeal to Jesus' "will" (θέλῃς) to "cleanse" (καθαρίσαι), repeated in Jesus' response of stretching out his hand and saying, θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, the latter of which is then repeated a third time with the emphatic "immediately": εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα.

The power of the "Lord" is further emphasized in his action of "reaching out his hand" and "touching him," which occurs as the turning point of the interaction.⁴¹ The

⁴⁰ *Hom. Matt.* 25:2 (cited in Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:13); Cf. also Add Esth 13:9-11.

reaching out of his “hand” (ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα) and “touching” has a double christological effect.⁴² First, in this context where Jesus’ power to heal a leper as the “Lord” is already stressed, the phrase ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα evokes the common image of Israel’s “Lord’s” powerful hand (7; often with ἐκτείνω + χεῖρ in the LXX) for rescuing and/or judging his people/the nations.⁴³ The hand of the filial κύριος has the power of the paternal κύριος.⁴⁴ Simultaneously, the accent on Jesus’ “touch” is surprising given both the stress on fulfilling Moses’ command in 8:4 and the fact that in neither of the two OT leper-healings is the leper *touched*. Such contact would usually signify the contraction of uncleanness (cf. Lev 5:3; Num 5:1-5; 12:13-15).⁴⁵ The main point is that the outstretched hand of the κύριος, like Israel’s κύριος in the OT, has the power to effect his will, such that he is not rendered unclean, nor is the leper himself simply “cleansed,” but rather,

⁴¹ Note Matthew’s change in Mark’s word order. Matthew: ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἤψατο αὐτοῦ. Mark: ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἤψατο. By making αὐτοῦ the object of ἤψατο rather than the genitive modifier of τὴν χεῖρα, Matthew further focuses on the fact that Jesus touched the *leper*.

⁴² Note that in the next pericope (8:13) no “touch” is required.

⁴³ The image of the mighty “hand” of Israel’s κύριος is spread over a broad array of Jewish texts. Those cited here are just a few examples: LXX: Exod 3:19, 20; 6:8; 7:5; 14:30, 31; Deut 3:24; 7:19; Pss 32:8; 143:7; Jer 6:12; 15:6; 21:5; Isa 1:25; 5:25; 11:11; 14:27; 49:22; cf. also, e.g., Add Esth 14:14; Wis 5:16; 10:20; 19:8; Sir 10:5; 36:3; Pss. Sol. 2:22; 5:5-6, 12; 13:1; 1QM XI, 1, 5, 11; XII, 11; XIII, 13; 4Q381 6; Philo, *Deus* 1:73; *T. Jos.* 1:5; *T. Job* 26:4; *Jos. Asen.* 12:8. Further instructive is to note how often in Exodus Moses is commanded by the κύριος to stretch forth his hand (ἐκτείνω + χεῖρ) to accomplish various tasks (e.g., 4:4; 7:19; 9:22, etc.), such that Moses’ “hand” is clearly the agent of YHWH’s mighty hand. Exodus, and various retellings, however, emphasize YHWH’s ultimate agency, while Moses is the intermediate agent (see chapter 4 below). Further, the motif of the “hand” of a human agent executing YHWH’s will is common as well. Yet, again, YHWH’s ultimate agency is almost always stressed, with the result that the accomplishment of the work falls on him (cf., e.g., Jdt 15:8-16:2; 16:5; 1QM XI, 1-5; *L.A.B.* 27:4, 12-13). On the contrary, the emphasis in Matt 8:3 falls not on Jesus as the agent of YHWH’s hand, but on the power of his own “hand” to heal. That is, his hand is YHWH’s hand. Luz mentions the OT background of the phrase, but does not pursue it in christological depth. Likewise, Davies and Allison, though not mentioning it here, retrospectively refer to 8:3 when commenting on 9:18, and argue that Matthew is likely recalling the OT motif of YHWH’s hand. They too, however, do not develop this thought christologically (*Matthew*, 2:126).

⁴⁴ Matthew repeatedly invokes the image of Jesus’ powerful “hand” (3:12; 8:3; 9:18; 12:49; 14:31; 19:13, 15; cf. 8:15 – “touch”)

⁴⁵ Contra Nolland, *Matthew*, 350 (and n. 11); cf., e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:13; France, *Matthew*, 307).

ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα.⁴⁶ Lastly, when Jesus commands him to go to the priest in 8:4, Matthew omits Mark's comment – περὶ τοῦ καθαρισμοῦ σου – again focusing on Jesus not only as the one who effected the healing, but who also has the authority to declare the leper “clean.”⁴⁷

The upshot is that Matthew underscores the sovereign will of the one addressed as κύριε to accomplish that which was considered within the power of Israel's God (as above, 2 Kgs 5.7; Num 12.13). As a result, it is difficult to agree with Müller when, attempting to curtail the cultic implications of προσκυνέω in 8:2, he says, “Das Zeugnis ist letztlich Zeichen für die Heilung durch Gott.”⁴⁸ This simply is not what the passage stresses. Though it remains to be seen in our discussion below how Jesus' command in 8.4 functions with 8.2-3, Matthew has consistently foregrounded the christological aspects of the pericope; the combination of the cultic overtones to the leper's approach (προσέρχομαι + προσκυνέω), the address of Jesus as κύριε, the appeal to his sovereign will, and the stretching out of his “hand” all converge to signify not only that “Jesus ist die Mitte des neuen Kultus”⁴⁹ or that the cry of the leper is reminiscent of a “prayerful cry” (*Gebetsruf*) to YHWH,⁵⁰ but more specifically, that the προσκύνῃσις he receives is that which belongs to the “Lord God” who has power over life and death.

⁴⁶ Matthew again changes Mark, who says, καὶ εὐθὺς ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα, καὶ ἐκαθαρίσθη (1:42). Matt 8:3: καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα. As Gnllka puts it, “strömt vom Wunderheiler die heilende Kraft aus, die durch die Berührung wirksam wird“ (*Matthäusevangelium*, 296).

⁴⁷ Cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 140. Pace, Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:15.

⁴⁸ Markus Müller, “Proskynese und Christologie nach Matthäus,” in *Kirche und Volk Gottes: Festschrift für Jürgen Roloff zum 70. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2000), 221.

⁴⁹ Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 248.

⁵⁰ Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:296.

8:4 – A Cryptic Ending

Having discussed the main action of the pericope, we turn now to its conclusion in 8:4, where Jesus instructs the former leper to offer the gift Moses commanded. This verse has proved difficult for many interpreters, not least because of its cryptic ending – εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς – for which the immediate context seems to supply no obvious antecedent. A “witness” to whom, and for what, exactly? As we commented above, several interpreters argue that Matthew’s main purpose in placing the pericope after the SM is to illustrate narratively Jesus’ claim in 5:17, that he came not to “abolish” the law (5:17): “The story is placed here primarily because of the reference to what Moses commanded. Jesus’ injunction to follow the Pentateuchal legislation happily illustrates one of the central themes of the sermon on the mount: Jesus did not come to do away with Moses.”⁵¹ Or, as Gnilka says more strongly, “Es ist nicht die besondere Größe der Machttat, die ihn dazu veranlaßte, sondern ihre Bestimmtheit durch die Gesetzesfrage [of 5:17].”⁵² As a result, the difficult εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς is often interpreted in various ways: (1) a non-christological manner, i.e., as a reference to the leper’s healing,⁵³ (2) in what we will argue is a christologically anemic way: Jesus keeps the law,⁵⁴ or (3) simply left undetermined.⁵⁵

We have already seen reason to doubt Gnilka’s judgment above, namely, that the passage functions here “not” because of the “greatness of the deed” but because of its “determination of the question of the law.” The passage focuses, rather, squarely on

⁵¹ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:10; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:6.

⁵² *op. cit.*, 2:297.

⁵³ Nolland, *Matthew*, 351; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 200.

⁵⁴ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:20.

⁵⁵ E.g. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:16.

Jesus' power to "cleanse" and comes on the heels of both his christologically-oriented conclusion to the SM as well as the narrative comment about the crowd's "amazement" at his authority. If anything, we should expect 8:4 to continue with something that closely accords with the christological and ecclesiological⁵⁶ significance of 8:2-3, precisely as does the next pericope, 8:5-13, and the summary at 8:16-17.

That 8:2-4 is to be read in light of 5:17-19 is not to be doubted, since this makes excellent sense of Matthew's arrangement. As 5:17-19 gives the proper context for Jesus' giving of a "new" law and precludes misinterpreting it as subverting Moses, so 8:2-4 introduces his messianic actions as consonant with Moses' law and illustrates his teaching. This alone would blunt the force, for example, of Müller's argument that 8:4 reorients the "worship" away from Jesus and onto "God,"⁵⁷ since 8:4 focuses on Jesus' honoring of the law, not on *who* accomplished the healing. Yet, there is a good bit more to be said about the way the language of this passage reverberates christologically with the rest of the narrative.

If we are indeed going to read 8:2-4 in light of 5:17, then we must read it in light of the whole verse (and everything in between). That is, those commentators who suggest that 8:4 shows Jesus adhering to "Moses" have neglected to reckon with the two other key parts of 5:17, namely, (1) Jesus' "fulfillment" (5:17b) of (2) the "law *and the prophets*" (5:17a). First, to the issue of "fulfillment."

⁵⁶ By "ecclesiological" I simply mean that the passage also focuses on the surprising identities of those who belong in the eschatological people of God reconstituted around Jesus, as does 8:5-13 and much of the rest of the narrative. Our focus thus far has been christological, but we will have occasion to comment more specifically on the "ecclesiological" below.

⁵⁷ Cf. *op. cit.*

The dense connotation of “fulfillment” here and elsewhere in Matthew, which has a long history of interpretation, is still much debated. However, there is a general consensus that it includes the way in which Jesus as Israel’s Messiah brings the law and prophets to their divinely-ordained *telos* in his eschatological teaching about and enactment of the kingdom.⁵⁸ This broad interpretation of “fulfillment” is confirmed by its connection with Matt 11:7-19, where Jesus once again invokes “the law and the prophets” as that which “prophesied until John...the Elijah to come,” who pointed toward the dawn of the eschatological age in the coming of Jesus (11:10/19). To read 8:2-4 in light of 5:17 is to consider not only how Jesus seeks not to “abolish” Moses, but also how he transfigures/fulfills Moses in his eschatological ministry as the Messiah Son of God.

Next, Jesus’ statement in 5:17 that he came to fulfill the law *and the prophets* is relevant to 8:2-4 for at least two reasons. First, before moving on to a distinct section of the narrative (8:18ff), Matthew epitomizes his series of the three related healings (8:1-15) with a summary of Jesus’ healings and a fulfillment quotation from Isaiah: ὅπως πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος, Αὐτὸς τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν ἔλαβεν καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν (8:17). The quotation here at the transition to a new section signals the reader to re-interpret the series of healings in 8:1-16 as the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy about the servant’s vicarious restoration of God’s people,⁵⁹ while also re-invoking and exemplifying Jesus’ programmatic statement in 5:17 about “fulfilling the prophets.” Christology and ecclesiology, as in the preceding pericopes, are

⁵⁸ Cf. France, *Matthew*, 183; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:485-6; Luz, *Matthew*, 1:217-18; Gundry, *Matthew*, 78-80, etc. Of course, all of these commentators provide much more nuance and depth, and sometimes disagree with one another. However, they all agree on the eschatological-christological import of “fulfill” here in 5:17 and throughout Matthew.

⁵⁹ Cf. Held, “Matthew as Interpreter,” 248.

here deeply intertwined.⁶⁰ Second, Jesus includes his “cleansing of lepers” in his response to John, whereby he summarizes his ministry by drawing heavily on several texts from Isaiah: τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν καὶ χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν, λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται, κτλ. . . . (11:5).⁶¹ Jesus’ interpretive summary allows for a “retrospective” reading of what has come before,⁶² including the healing of the leper (cf. also 10:8). The leper’s “cleansing” is by no means simply a demonstration of Jesus’ obedience to the law of Moses. Rather, it is part and parcel of his fulfillment of Isaiah’s vision of the end of the exile, the dawning of YHWH’s eschatological glory in the restoration of the blind, lame, lepers, poor, and the dead. Again, christology and ecclesiology meet.

We return now to 8:4, where Jesus commands the leper: ὕπαγε σεαυτὸν δεῖξον τῷ ἱερεῖ καὶ προσένεγκον τὸ δῶρον ὃ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς, εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς. In light of our discussion above, we would expect the cryptic phrase εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς to have specifically christological/eschatological content.⁶³ Four factors further suggest as much.

First, and most importantly, Matthew twice re-employs this exact phrase – εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς – in the two other instances, both of which refer to testimony about Jesus.⁶⁴ “Testimony” (μαρτύριον) in Matthew, that is, is fundamentally oriented toward Jesus. Second, the summary passages we examined above retrospectively interpret these

⁶⁰ Matthew’s evocation of Isaiah’s servant in 8:17 fits well with the narrative “time” we discussed above. From 3:15-27:66 Jesus’ glory is largely hidden, and he bears the infirmities of his people for their salvation, even while this does not contradict (and indeed is an appropriate expression of) his identity as Emmanuel. Also, soon after this passage about Jesus as servant, he is once again declared Son of God by those who know the secret of his identity (8:29; see n. 36 above).

⁶¹ The significance of “lepers” in 11:5 is heightened by the fact that it does not occur in any of the Isaian passages upon which the summary in 11:5 draws (e.g., 29:18, 35:5, 42:7, 61:1). Indeed, “lepers” are not mentioned in the whole book of Isaiah.

⁶² On “retrospective” reading, see Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (aug. ed.; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 168-87.

⁶³ Contra France, *Matthew*, 308; cf. Fiedler, *Matthäus*, 201; Nolland, *Matthew*, 351.

⁶⁴ εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς/ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (10:18; 24:14)

events as testimony to Jesus' fulfillment of prophetic promises (8:16-17; 11:5). Third, while some think a christological interpretation of "testimony" would contradict 8:4a, which they interpret as Matthew's adoption of Mark's messianic secret, this need not be the case.⁶⁵ Rather, the christological interpretation makes sense of how Matthew has re-employed Mark's secrecy motif for a slightly different purpose here. By omitting Mark's "he sternly charged him and sent him away at once" (1:43), Matthew reinforces Jesus' urgency to see his disciples live by the law rather than the secrecy of the healing.⁶⁶ Fourth, we noted above that a prominent intertext for the healing of the leper is 2 Kings 5, Naaman's healing. That episode ends specifically with Naaman testifying to the God of Israel: ἰδοὺ δὴ ἔγνωκα ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ ὅτι ἀλλ' ἢ ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ (5:15). It aptly illustrates the point we are making – "testimony" in such an instance naturally implies recognition of the one who effected the healing.

In sum, to divorce the leper's reincorporation into the people of God from the distinct christological focus of this passage and the rest of the narrative misses how deeply Matthew has intertwined christology and ecclesiology. Further, it misses one of the more subtle, but noteworthy christological motifs of the passage, viz., Matthew's distinct emphasis on Jesus' faithfulness to, and eschatological fulfillment of, the law and the prophets. The leper's cleansing testifies to the realization of Isaiah's eschatological promises in κύριος Jesus.

⁶⁵ Cf., e.g., Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 199-200.

⁶⁶ As is widely recognized, Matthew elsewhere de-emphasizes Mark's secrecy motif.

III. Intermediate Summary

The full shape of Matthew's use of προσκυνέω in 8:2-4, we have seen, can be heard through a sustained dialogue not only with the present passage, but with the broader christological concerns of the Gospel. We have argued that "homage" is much too anemic an interpretation when one considers the contextual setting into which Matthew places this passage, the OT intertexts, the changes Matthew has made to Mark's text, and the christological focus of each step of the passage. Further, the literary effect of Matthew's use of προσκυνέω here, coupled with the christological emphases discussed above, is to create a unity between the one whom the leper addresses as κύριε and the one whom Jesus declares is worthy of προσκύνησις – Israel's κύριος (4:10).

To emphasize the way in which this passage underscores the power and authority the Son has in himself is not, however, to separate his working apart from, or much less, over against, the Father. This indeed is where speaking of Matthew's christology requires all the nuance of his narrative. On the one hand, a passage like 8:2-4 points to Jesus as much more than a "greater Moses," "greater prophet," or "greater David," such that he is not just another "agent" (even if a good bit "higher") in God's long line of "agents." He is, rather, qualitatively distinct as the "Son," or as the leper addresses him here, the "Lord." He speaks and acts not as one *through* whom God acts, but as though the authority and power of Israel's God were his own. On the other hand, he is "Son," which necessarily and by definition coordinates him with and orients him toward the "Father" at all times, the one from whom he receives all "authority" (11:27; 28:18). Our grammar for speaking about the interplay between Father and Son will be shaped only as we continue

working through Matthew's narrative. However, at this point, 8:2-4 further molds our ability to articulate the Gospel's christological outlook. Far from being "Selbstverständlich" that the leper's προσκύνησις to his κύριος is not that which was due to Israel's God, everything in the passage points to how this κύριος shares in the worship which belongs to κύριος ὁ θεός, (4:10), the Father.

IV. Matt 9:18; 15:25; 20:20 – The Christological Accumulation of προσκύνησις

The next three instances of "supplicatory" προσκύνησις before Jesus reflect motifs similar to that of the healing of the leper. As demonstrated in the chart below (with some elements out of order for ease of reference), all four share a number of elements. Though not repeated exactly, they share enough features to give them a stylized form: (1) an approach to Jesus using (προσ/εξ)έρχομαι, (2) the naming of the suppliant (in 8:2; 9:1 & 15:22 with ἰδοὺ), (3) προσκυνέω, (4) the naming of the request with (5) either explicit (8:2; 9:18) or implicit confidence (15:22, 25; 20:20) that Jesus can do what they ask:

<p>Matt 8:2</p> <p><u>καὶ ἰδοὺ λεπρὸς</u></p> <p><u>προσελθὼν</u> <u>προσεκύνει αὐτῷ</u> <u>λέγων·</u></p> <p>request for self</p> <p><u>κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς</u> <u>δύνασαι με</u> <u>καθαρίσαι.</u></p>	<p>Matt 9:18</p> <p><u>ἰδοὺ ἄρχων εἷς</u></p> <p><u>ἐλθὼν προσεκύνει</u> <u>αὐτῷ λέγων</u> ὅτι</p> <p><u>ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἄρτι</u> <u>ἐτελεύτησεν·</u></p> <p>ἀλλὰ ἐλθὼν ἐπίθεις <u>τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπ’</u> <u>αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται.</u></p>	<p>Matt 15:22, 25</p> <p>καὶ <u>ἰδοὺ γυνή</u> <u>Χαναναία</u> ἀπὸ τῶν ὀρίων ἐκείνων</p> <p><u>ἐξελθοῦσα</u> ἔκραζεν <u>λέγουσα·</u> ἡ δὲ <u>ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνει</u> <u>αὐτῷ λέγουσα·</u></p> <p><u>ἡ θυγάτηρ μου</u> <u>κακῶς δαιμονίζεται.</u></p> <p><u>ἐλέησόν με, κύριε</u> υἱὸς Δαβὶδ· / <u>κύριε,</u> <u>βοήθει μοι.</u></p>	<p>Matt 20:20 , 21</p> <p><u>ἡ μήτηρ</u> τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου μετὰ τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῆς</p> <p>Τότε <u>προσηλθεν</u> <u>αὐτῷ / προσκυνοῦσα</u></p> <p>καὶ <u>αἰτοῦσά</u> τι ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ</p> <p><u>εἶπε ἵνα</u> καθίσωσιν οὗτοι οἱ δύο υἱοὶ μου εἷς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου</p>
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These repeated patterns suggest that the stories should be read as “narrative analogies”; each invokes the other as mutually interpretive and contributes to the development of distinctive themes. More specifically, we will argue that they extend the way in which the narrative binds together the identity of Father and Son through the language of προσκυνέω. Indeed, in each of these stylized encounters Matthew has either adapted Mark’s language of “falling at his feet” to his preferred προσκυνέω (8:2[?]; 9:18; 15:25), or he has added the language where Mark did not originally have even the gesture (20:20; cf. 14:33).⁶⁷ As we saw in the healing of the leper (8:2-4), so also we will see that in each of the following three passages Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω reflects the

⁶⁷ Cf. Matt 8:2/Mark 1:40; Matt 9:18/Mark 5:22; Matt 15:25/Mark 7:25; Matt 20:20/Mark 10:35 (cf. Matt 14:33/Mark 6:51-2).

passage's (and the entire narrative's) theme of Jesus' universal lordship and/or filial relation to the Father.⁶⁸ As a result, in the dawning of the Father's kingdom in his Son's ministry of healing, the reader is further pressured to articulate the identity of Israel's God in a way that is inextricably bound up in the earthly life of the Son, who is worshiped along with the Father.

IV.1 Matt 9:18-33 – The Worshipping Ruler

As with the healing of the leper, Matthew's stylized language for the ruler's (ἄρχων, 9:18) approach to Jesus – ἔρχομαι + προσκυνέω – has elicited comment from most interpreters of Matthew. A number of scholars consider the ruler's προσκύνησις before Jesus in 9:18 not as “worship,” but as “respect” or “deference” to Jesus.⁶⁹ Others, though noticing Matthew's stylized formula, neglect to discuss how it furthers Matthew's narrative christology in this instance.⁷⁰ Bonnard, conscious of Matthew's use of the formula elsewhere, says, “[B]ien qu'il ne faille pas exagérer l'importance de la proskynése ou prosternement antique, Mat. donne à ce terme une valeur qui le rapproche de l'adoration.”⁷¹ He does not, however, supply much by way of argument for this interpretation, nor does he explain exactly what “qui le rapproche de l'adoration” means. In what follows, we will examine a number of factors that suggest Matthew is using προσκυνέω here in concert with his previous usages, instructing the reader that the proper

⁶⁸ In the interest of space, we will only comment briefly on προσκυνέω in 20:20. Cf. note 126 below.

⁶⁹ E.g., Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:340; Carter, *Matthew*, 224; France, *Matthew*, 358; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 248; cf. also Nolland, *Matthew*, 392, 394. Nolland translates προσκυνέω as “obedience,” but in his discussion of 8:2 (to which he refers at 9:18), he argues that Matthew is “deliberately blurring” the distinction between “deferential respect” and “religious worship” (349).

⁷⁰ E.g., Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 274; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:125.

⁷¹ *Matthieu*, 135.

response to Jesus, the one in whom is the power of life and death, is the humble devotion due to Israel's God. Per our usual procedure, we will consider (1) the passage in its immediate literary context, (2) Matthew's adaptations of Mark, and (3) the relation of this passage to the broader narrative.

As Matthew commonly does, he begins this pericope with a genitive absolute that ties the passage to what has preceded it – ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς (9:18) – suggesting that the healing of the ruler's daughter, the woman with the flow of blood, the two blind men, and the demon possessed man illustrate Jesus' previous discourse about the coming of the bridegroom and the new wine he brings (9:14-17).⁷² Further suggesting the interpretive link between 9:14-17 and 9:18-33 is the way in which Matthew has relocated the healing of Jairus' daughter/the woman with the flow of blood from Mark (5:21-43) so that it occurs immediately after the discussion about the bridegroom/fasting (Mk 2:18-22). Therefore, we turn to 9:14-17 as the relevant context for 9:18-33.

9:14-17

Matt 9:14-17 is much too complex to discuss in extensive detail here, and we need not be detained by many of the exegetical questions this passage engenders. Rather, we will highlight some of the main themes that are relevant to 9:18-33. As a whole, 9:14-

⁷² Note Carter's insightful observation that Matthew's lack of a subject at the beginning of new sections prompts the reader to read what follows in light of previous material (*Matthew and the Margins*, 129); cf. also Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 135; *pace*, Hagner (*Matthew 1-13*, 248), who argues against a connection with 9:14-17. One should include the healing of the demoniac in 9:32-4 with 9:18-26 because, like 9:18, Matthew has closely linked it with the preceding pericope with a genitive absolute. Also, Matthew favors groups of threes, and 9:32-4 serves as the third in this grouping. On Matthew's use of groups of three, cf. Dale C. Allison, Jr., "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," in *Studies in Matthew*, 173-216.

17 serves as a controversy⁷³ story within a series of controversy stories (9:1-8, 9-13) that highlight, among other things, Jesus' authority in exercising the prerogatives of God (9:6) and in reshaping the eschatological people of God around himself (9:12-13). Matt 9:14-17, the third "controversy" in the series, focuses on the question of John's disciples: τί ἡμεῖς καὶ οἱ Φαρισαῖοι νηστεύομεν, οἱ δὲ μαθηταί σου οὐ νηστεύουσιν; (9:14). Jesus' answer is linked thematically with the two previous accounts by responding in a way that highlights his *identity* as the justification for his words and deeds (9:6-8, 12-13). His disciples do not fast, because he is the eschatological bridegroom in whose presence "mourning" is inapposite: μὴ δύνανται οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος πενθεῖν ἐφ' ὅσον μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστιν ὁ νυμφίος; (9:15; cf. 22:2-14; 25:1-13;).⁷⁴

The image of Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom is congruent with, and yet deepens, the various images the narrative has used thus far to describe the intimate link between both Jesus and the Father and also Jesus and his people (1:21; 3:11-12). As those passages bound together Father and Son in their mutual participation in the redemption of Israel,⁷⁵ so also the bridegroom image plays a similar role. By slightly rearranging Mark's word order, Matthew stresses the identity of Jesus as the bridegroom who is "with" his people (μετ' αὐτῶν), recalling the language of the infancy narrative (μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός, 1:23), as well as anticipating his later development of this same theme

⁷³ "Controversy" may not be quite the correct term, since John the Baptist and his disciples are by no means Jesus' opponents in Matthew, though they seem to remain confused (cf. 3:14; 11:2-3)!

⁷⁴ Most commentators recognize the christological reference in the bridegroom metaphor, which is made clear both by the obvious allusion to the passion (9:15d) and Matthew's christological uses of the bridegroom metaphor elsewhere, such as in 22:1-14 and 25:1-13 (cf., e.g., Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:336; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:110; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:37; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 1:243; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 1:318). However, Nolland contends that, "Despite the claim often made, 'bridegroom' here is neither a divine nor a messianic self-designation" (Matthew, 390, n.182; but cf. his seemingly contradictory comments on p. 390).

⁷⁵ Cf. chpt. 2 above.

(18:20; 28:20).⁷⁶ The image is also christologically striking, because, as has often been noted, YHWH is always portrayed as Israel's husband in the OT, and never is the Messiah delineated in such a way (Jer 2:2; 31:32; Hos 2:14-18; Isa 54:5-6).⁷⁷ More particularly relevant is Isaiah's vision of YHWH's remarriage to his people as an image of the end of the exile and restoration of Israel (cf. 54:6-8; 62:4-5; cf. 61:10; 50:1).⁷⁸ Isa 61-2 is, in fact, the only passage in the OT that connects the specific image of the bridegroom (νύμφιος) with the new age, a passage which finds particularly noteworthy resonance with Matt 9:14-17. In his "vindication" (62:1-2) and restoration of his people, YHWH remarries and rejoices over them as a "bridegroom rejoices over his bride": καὶ ἔσται ὃν τρόπον εὐφρανθήσεται νυμφίος ἐπὶ νύμφῃ οὕτως εὐφρανθήσεται κύριος ἐπὶ σοί (62:5).⁷⁹

Further, in his remarriage of his people, their "mourning" (πενθέω, 61:2, 3) turns to rejoicing (εὐφραίνω, 61:10; 62:5). Interestingly, in 9:15, Matthew has changed Mark's statement about the inappropriateness of "fasting" (νηστεύειν, Mk 2:19) in the bridegroom's presence to "mourning" (πενθεῖν). Much like the magi's and women's

⁷⁶ Mark 2:19: ὁ νυμφίος μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστίν. Matt 9:15: μετ' αὐτῶν ἐστίν ὁ νυμφίος. Matthew fronts the prepositional phrase and moves the subject to the end of the clause, mirroring 1:23 (cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 169-70).

⁷⁷ Cf. Michael Tait, *Jesus, the Divine Bridegroom, in Mark 2.18-22: Mark's Christology Upgraded* (AnBib 185; Rome: Gregorian and Biblical Press, 2010), esp. 135-199; Rikk Watts, "In the Power and Authority of God: A Preliminary Exploration of Yahweh Christology in Mark," (SBL Seminar Paper; New Orleans: Annual SBL Meeting, 2009), 11; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2: 110. The image is infrequently employed for YHWH in non-biblical literature, but cf. *Pirqe R. Eli* 56B.

⁷⁸ Watts, "In the Power and Authority of God," 11.

⁷⁹ ומשׁוּשׁ חֲתָן עַל־כֻּלָּהּ יֵשִׁישׁ עֲלֶיךָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ (On some of the difficult textual issues related to this passage, cf. Tait, *The Divine Bridegroom*, 157-164).

“rejoicing” in their encounters with Jesus (2:10; 28:8-9), the disciples do not mourn, but rejoice in the presence of the bridegroom (9:15).⁸⁰

Three further thematic connections suggest Isa 61-2 may serve as an appropriate intertext here – the image of a new covenant (διαθήκην αἰώνιον, 61:8), the people enjoying their “wine” in the new age (61:8; cf. 61:5), and the coming of YHWH as “Savior/salvation” (62:11 - ὁ σωτὴρ, ἡσׁי).⁸¹ While occasionally Jesus’ image of “new wine” (9:17) is simply taken as an agricultural metaphor,⁸² in the context of the eschatological bridegroom metaphor (9:15) and the later institution of the “covenant” (διαθήκη, 26:28) with “the fruit of the vine” (τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου, 26:29), we should probably hear the “new wine” in 9:17 as an echo of the new covenant inaugurated in Jesus’ ministry.⁸³ Further, Jesus as “Savior” is, of course, highlighted in his conception (1:21), and again stressed in the passage we are about to examine, 9:18-33, where “save” (σώζω) is repeated three times in two verses (9:21-2).

While I would not argue that we can be certain Matt 9:15-17 is drawing directly on Isa 61-2, largely because of the lack of sustained verbal parallels, the more salient point is that Isa 61-2 epitomizes Israel’s hopes: YHWH’s return, the renewal of the

⁸⁰ It may also be that the change to “mourning” in Matthew alludes to Jesus’ death (so, Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:109). However, Matthew returns to Mark’s parallelism in the following clause, saying that when the bridegroom is taken away, then the “sons” of the bridegroom “will fast” (9:15d). If Matthew were to emphasize the “mourning” that will come at the bridegroom’s departure, it would have made more sense to replace the final “will fast,” with “will mourn.” As it is, the change to “mourning” in 9:15b emphasizes more its inappropriateness in the joyful presence of the bridegroom than it does the “mourning” that will come when the bridegroom is taken away. Cf. also Hagner (*Matthew 1-13*, 243) for an interpretation similar to the one given here.

⁸¹ “Savior” seems an appropriate translation of “your salvation” here because in the MT, “salvation” (יִשְׁעָה) is personified, being parallel to “with him” (אִתּוֹ) in the next clause. That Matthew is drawing on themes from Isa 61-2 is further strengthened by the fact that in 21:5 he introduces his quotation of Zech 9:9 with a phrase from Isa 62:11 (LXX), a verse that should likely be read as an accompanying intertext to Zech 9:9.

⁸² E.g., Nolland, *Matthew*, 392.

⁸³ For new wine as a symbol of the new age, cf. Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (trans. S. H. Hooke; New York: Scribner, 1972), 118; cf. also 1QSa II, 17-20; 11Q[Temple]19 XIX, 11- XXI, 10.

covenant, and the restoration of his people, all of which comes to poignant expression in the image of YHWH and Israel as husband and wife, bridegroom and bride. In Matt 9:15-17, we overhear Jesus appropriating this kind of OT imagery for himself, the christological significance of which is confirmed by its influential role in the narrative's development.

The image of Jesus as the eschatological bridegroom is particularly important for Matthew's narrative about Jesus, since he re-invokes it, along with similar themes, twice more in parabolic material (22:1-14; 25:1-13).⁸⁴ Significantly, in the parable of the wedding banquet (22:2-14) Matthew connects the bridegroom image with his most fundamental mode of speech about Jesus – a Father/King gives a wedding banquet for his “Son” (22:2), but his invitation is nonetheless rejected by those invited (i.e. Israel's leaders).⁸⁵ The parable is transparently about the inbreaking of God's kingdom in the coming of the Son and his messengers, in which one should rejoice as one does at a wedding and its festivities. However, the Son's wedding and the Father's invitation has inexplicably elicited rejection (22:5-6), the same rejection Jesus anticipated in his first use of the *νύμφιος*-image (9:15). Thus, the bridegroom/Father/Son imagery in Matt 22:2-14 epitomizes a number of themes from the larger narrative; the unique relation the Father has to his people is narrated as their marriage to his Son, yet with the strange twist that he is rejected (cf. also 21:33-42). In assuming the relation to Israel that was reserved for YHWH, the Son is not a rival to Israel's God, since it is the Father who has

⁸⁴ 25:1-13 is unique to Matthew.

⁸⁵ Note that in the Lukan parallel there is no explicit “son” imagery (14:16-17).

given his people to his Son. For Matthew, rather, the coming of YHWH to remarry his people and to inaugurate his kingdom is fulfilled in the coming of his Son.

9:18

The brief discussion of the christological nuances of 9:14-17 reinforces the unbroken link the narrative creates between that text and 9:18-33. As noted above, Matthew has relocated 9:18-33 from its place in Mark so that it will occur on the heels of 9:14-17, and he has depicted the leader's approach to Jesus while the words are, literally, still in Jesus' mouth (ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς, 9:18). Matthew's placement of the miracle stories (9:18-33) immediately after Jesus' exposition of his role as the eschatological bridegroom thus serves a similar literary role as the preceding healing of the paralytic (9:6-7). There, Jesus claims authority to forgive sins, and vindicates that claim by healing the paralytic. So also the chronological overlapping of Jesus' discourse in 9:14-17 with the coming of the "leader" in 9:18 vindicates his response to John's disciples; Jesus and his disciples do not fast like others because he is the eschatological bridegroom in whom the new age is dawning, demonstrated in the subsequent miracles and the people's response of "amazement" (ἐθαύμασαν, 9:33).

Further, as with his arrangement of the healing of the leper, Matthew begins this new set of healings with the προσκύνῃς of the suppliant, while not using such language in the subsequent healings.⁸⁶ Not only the verbal repetition of προσκυνέω but also the repetition in its literary placement – at the beginning of a new narrative section – re-activates its earlier occurrences and contributes to its cumulative christological effect.

⁸⁶ In Mark 5:33, the woman comes and "falls down before him" (προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ). Matthew usually changes such an action in Mark to a form of προσκυνέω, but here he has deleted it (9:21-22). See the explanation in chapter 4, pp. 173-6.

Turning to the details of the passage, as with the healing of the leper, Matthew has significantly shortened Mark's account of the raising of the ruler's daughter:

<p>Mark 5:22-23</p> <p>Καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τῶν ἀρχισυναγῶγων, ὀνόματι Ἰαῖρος, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν πίπτει πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ ²³ καὶ παρακαλεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ λέγων ὅτι τὸ θυγάτριόν μου ἐσχάτως ἔχει, ἵνα ἐλθὼν ἐπιθῇς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ ἵνα σωθῇ καὶ ζήσῃ.</p>	<p>Matt 9:18</p> <p>ἰδοὺ ἄρχων εἷς ἐλθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων ὅτι ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν· ἀλλὰ ἐλθὼν ἐπίθες τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπ' αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται.</p>
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Comparing the two passages is instructive on a number of levels for what Matthew's version accomplishes literarily and christologically. First, as we noted above, he introduces his stylized approach formula, which serves as a literary link between this and other accounts of those who approach Jesus in faith – to approach Jesus properly is to approach him in προσκύνησις. Second, Matthew has telescoped Mark's version such that the daughter is already dead, which serves a double function: (1) it heightens from the beginning of the account Jesus' power not only to heal, but to raise the dead,⁸⁷ and (2) it intensifies the leader's faith in that power, the latter of which is a major theme in this section of the narrative (cf. 9:22, 28, 29). Third, Matthew's shift to the imperative ἐπίθες and the indicative ζήσεται (instead of Mark's subjunctive) further strengthens the ruler's faith in Jesus' absolute power – “Place your hand on her, and she *will* live.” All of these slight modifications to Mark's account sit well with the interpretation we gave above

⁸⁷ In Mark, Jairus and his servants believe Jesus can heal, but do not believe, at least initially, that he can raise the dead (5:35).

about the christological claims in 9:1-17, and 9:14-17 in particular – the Matthean Jesus is Israel’s bridegroom ushering in the new age.

Also telling is what Matthew has here “gapped,” namely, a personal address. In every other account in the narrative of an individual requesting a miracle from Jesus, they address him as κύριε (8:2, 6, 21, 25, cf. 29; 9:27-28; 14:28; 15:22, 25; 17:15; 20:30,⁸⁸ 33), to the point that Matthew adds it at least five times to Markan material.⁸⁹ The result is that the lack of address in 9:18 is conspicuously absent. Why has Matthew not done the same here when the account so obviously echoes elements of the other healings, especially 8:1-4 and 8:5-13?⁹⁰ Surprisingly, few have noticed this glaring omission. Maybe, of course, this speaks to its insignificance. Yet, in light of what we have seen above – Matthew’s re-ordering of this section of Mark to link it closely with 9:14-17, his redaction of the passage itself (Mark 5:22-3), and his otherwise consistent pattern with the κύριε-address – I would suggest otherwise. Hagner, who does recognize the omission, says, “His estimate of Jesus is not clear, no title being used, but he clearly had heard of Jesus’ powerful deeds and had at least a shred of hope that Jesus could do something in his dire circumstances.”⁹¹ The passage, however, seems to point in precisely the opposite direction. The ruler has complete faith that Jesus *can* raise his *dead* daughter (ἐπίθες τὴν

⁸⁸ There is a difficult textual issue in 20:30 in which attestation for the originality of κύριε is almost equally split, and is thus retained in brackets in NA²⁸. Nonetheless, in v. 33, κύριε occurs where in the Markan parallel it is ῥαββουνί (Mk 10:51). Regarding 20:30, it seems most likely that the omission of κύριε is due to assimilation to the earlier account of the healing of the blind men (9:27), where Jesus is addressed first as “son of David,” and subsequently as “Lord.”

⁸⁹ Matt 8:2/Mark 1:40; Matt 8:25/Mark 4:38; Matt 15:22/Mark 7:26; Matt 17:15/Mark 9:17; Matt 20:30(?) /Mark 19:49; Matt 20:33/Mark 10:51.

⁹⁰ As has long been noted, disciples/those who turn to Jesus for help always address him as κύριε in Matthew’s Gospel, while his opponents/potential opponents address him as διδάσκαλε. Cf. Bornkamm, “End-Expectation,” 41-3.

⁹¹ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 248.

χεῖρά σου ἐπ’ αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται). Further emphasizing his high “estimation” of Jesus, the ruler falls before him in προσκύνῃς.⁹² Indeed, as many commentators recognize, this ruler’s actions and words echo those of the centurion (8:5-13), whom Jesus commends greatly (8:10).⁹³ A different explanation, then, is in order.

The literary effect of gapping a personal address in the mouth of the leader, while overlapping his coming to Jesus with the previous discourse both syntactically (with the genitive absolute) and thematically (the new age/raising the dead), is to further integrate Jesus’ description of himself in the previous passage with the ruler’s request. The result is that the ruler’s appeal falls, for the reader, on Jesus-the-bridegroom, the one in whom the new age is present.⁹⁴ This interpretation makes sense not only of the gapped address, but of the way in which Matthew sums up this section of three miracles (9:18-34) in 9:33: οὐδέποτε ἐφάνη οὕτως ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ. Such has never “appeared” because it is, Matthew has told us, “new” in the eschatological bridegroom (9:15-17; cf. Isa 43:19).⁹⁵

IV.2 Intermediate Summary

The narrative flow for which we have advocated here comes together to instruct us how to hear Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 9:18, and thus its implications for Jesus’

⁹² Cf. Alexander Sand, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1986), 201. Also, it would be difficult to argue that Matthew has not included a κύριε-address because the man is a “ruler,” and therefore is to be identified with Jesus’ opponents (who never in Matthew address Jesus as κύριε). Matthew, however, has already removed from Mark that which might identify the man with those who often oppose Jesus in the first Gospel, viz., that he was “one of the leaders of the synagogue” (Mark 5.22).

⁹³ Cf., e.g., Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:340; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 135.

⁹⁴ Cf. n. 72 above.

⁹⁵ Matthew may be echoing in 9:33 the “appearing” of Jesus star/light (2:7, φαινόμενον), the light of YHWH’s glory that has “risen” upon the people (4:16; cf. Isa 9:2; 60:1-3). Further, the crowd’s declaration in 9:33 mostly likely serves as a conclusion not only to the healing of the demoniac in 9:32, but to the whole preceding section of miracles (so Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:139).

identity in his narrative. The forceful christology of 9:1-17, which climaxes in Jesus' declaration of himself as the bridegroom who brings a new age – with all of its overtones of YHWH as Israel's bridegroom – flows uninterrupted into the narration of the ruler's plea for his deceased daughter. He proclaims Jesus' ability to raise the dead with only the touch of his hand (τὴν χεῖρά σου), which itself re-invokes the healing of the leper by the mighty “hand” of κύριος Jesus (8:3; cf. the discussion of Jesus' “hand” above). The upshot – as with the healing of the leper – is that Matthew's προσκυνέω language is set within a larger narrative pattern of depicting Jesus as the embodiment of Israel's God, to whom more than “homage” is due. He is Israel's husband and savior, the Father's Son; as such, he is not worshiped in place of the Father, but precisely because he is the filial presence of the Father, in whom resides the power of life and death.

IV.3 Matt 15:21-28 – The Worshipping Canaanite

While Matthew's next use of προσκυνέω occurs in 14:33, we will treat that text separately, since it is – as we will see – definitive for our interpretation of προσκυνέω in Matthew. The next supplicatory occurrence of προσκυνέω, then, occurs in 15:21-28, the healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter. Although much has passed in the narrative since the raising of the ruler's daughter in 9:18-26, the Canaanite woman's request is closely linked to it and the other healings in several important thematic and verbal ways, suggesting that those other passages should reverberate in the reading of this passage (see the chart above). As usual, our specific question revolves around Matthew's stylized use of προσκυνέω. We will first set the passage in its literary context, noting its contribution

to the flow of the narrative, and then discuss how Matthew has shaped the passage itself to reflect the larger christological outlook of his Gospel.

As we have seen in previous episodes, this passage, too, weaves together two themes that are at the heart of Matthew's narrative – christology and ecclesiology – the question of Jesus' identity and the people reconstituted around him.⁹⁶ More specifically, as with the magi and the centurion – both of which find clear resonances in 15:21-28 – the Canaanite woman serves to underscore the Matthean theme of Jesus' rejection by Israel and his reception by unexpected individuals, even Gentiles.⁹⁷

Following on the heels of the controversy about hand-washing, Matthew says that Jesus, ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὰ μέρη Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος (15:21). Both the change to ἀνεχώρησεν (Mark 7:24: ἀπῆλθεν) and his addition of “and Sidon” to Mark are important for linking this passage to the previous controversy episode as well as for setting the stage for the christological emphases Matthew will highlight.⁹⁸ Regarding ἀναχωρέω, it is consistently used both in the LXX and by Matthew in “contexts de manace ou de violence” and “Matthieu l'utilise en référence au moins indirecte à Jésus, pour évoquer l'éloignement devant l'hostilité d'Hérode ou des pharisiens.”⁹⁹ When we hear in 15:21 that Jesus “departed” (ἀνεχώρησεν), it resonates with the just-mentioned “Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem” (15:1), who continue to pose a threat to Jesus and his ministry, in this instance by questioning him on his disciples' departure from *halakhic* tradition.

⁹⁶ Or, as Alice Dermience puts it, this passage highlights “trios thèmes particuliers: la foi, les disciples, et la christologie” (“La Péricope de la Cananéenne [Matt 15:21-28]: Rédaction et Théologie,” *ETL* 1 [1982]: 46)

⁹⁷ Cf. Christoph Burger, *Jesus als Davidsohn: Eine Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 81.

⁹⁸ On the later scribal addition of καὶ Σιδῶνος to Mark 7:24, see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 1994), 82.

⁹⁹ Dermience, “La Péricope de la Cananéenne,” 27. Cf. 2:12; 2:13-14, (cf. v. 22); 12:14-15 (cf. 4:12; 14:13).

Israel's leaders continue to fail in recognizing its Messiah and constitute a rising threat to Jesus' ministry (cf., e.g., 2:3; 11:21-14; 12:22-24; 13:11-15).

Further along these lines, Jesus "withdrawal" toward/into (εἰς) "Tyre and Sidon" in 15:21 reinforces the Matthean theme of Israel's rejection of its Messiah and his reception and recognition by foreigners by recalling and confirming Jesus' earlier pronouncement against Israelite towns: οὐαὶ σοι, Χοραζὶν, οὐαὶ σοι, Βηθσαϊδᾶ· ὅτι εἰ ἐν Τύρῳ καὶ Σιδῶνι ἐγένοντο αἱ δυνάμεις αἱ γινόμεναι ἐν ὑμῖν, πάλαι ἂν ἐν σάκκῳ καὶ σποδῷ μετενόησαν (11:21). While the leaders "from Jerusalem" (15:1) fail to recognize Jesus, a Canaanite woman from the region of Tyre and Sidon not only puts her faith in Jesus,¹⁰⁰ but articulates Jesus' identity in her requests and actions in ways deeply consonant with Matthew's christological concerns.

Indeed, Matthew narrates the Canaanite woman as the strongest possible foil to Israel's leaders, and even to Jesus' disciples. As Matthew has arranged it, the story of the Canaanite woman is sandwiched between two accounts of the disciples "little faith" (ὀλιγόπιστος; 14:31; 16:8; cf. also 13:58), which stands in marked contrast to her "great faith" (μεγάλῃ σου ἡ πίστις;¹⁰¹ 15:28).¹⁰² Or, again, in the immediately succeeding pericope, the disciples' failure to trust Jesus to provide enough "bread" (ἄρτοι τοσοῦτοι, 15:33; cf. 16:7) for the crowd, even in light of the previous (and very recent!) miraculous feeding with the "bread" (14:17, 19), could not be more strongly contrasted with her

¹⁰⁰ Matthew's description of her as a "Canaanite" (cf. Mk 7:26 - Ἑλληνίς, Συροφονικίσσα) further reinforces the fact that even though she represents Israel's bitterest enemies – historically speaking – there has nonetheless been a dramatic reversal. Israel has rejected its Messiah; a Canaanite receives him (cf. Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2: 206; Sand, *Matthäus*, 315; Nolland, *Matthew*, 631).

¹⁰¹ At no other place in Matthew is "faith" qualified as "great" (though cf. 8:10).

¹⁰² By removing Mark's account of the deaf and mute man (7:31-37) and therefore following the pericope about the Canaanite woman with the feeding of the four thousand and the disciples' misunderstanding/lack of faith about the bread, Matthew brings into stronger relief the faith of the Canaanite woman.

trusting Jesus for the “crumbs” (τῶν ψυχίων, 15:27) of the “children’s bread” (τὸν ἄρτον τῶν τέκνων, 15:26).¹⁰³ Though one could multiply these sorts of details, one further aspect highlights the contrast between the woman and the disciples/Israel: Jesus has departed for/toward the region of Tyre and Sidon, but before he arrives, she “comes out” to him, proclaiming him “son of David.”¹⁰⁴ When he fails to answer, she persists: ἡ δὲ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνει αὐτῷ (15:25). In the previous pericope, the Pharisees and scribes “came from” their own city, Jerusalem (προσέρχονται τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων), not to confess his royal identity and seek his favor, but apparently for the sole reason of questioning him (15:1; cf. 16:1).¹⁰⁵

This sequence of events in Matthew’s telling resonates strikingly with the story of the magi. They too leave their country and come seeking the “King of the Jews” (2:2), and while Herod and Jerusalem react in fear (2:3), the magi find the infant Jesus and “worship” him (2:11). So also this woman – in contrast to the leaders from Jerusalem

¹⁰³ This whole section of the narrative orbits around the issue of “bread.” One is tempted to see a literary pattern in Matthew’s arrangement, with the story of the Canaanite woman at the center:

- A. Feeding of 5,000 with “bread” (14:17, 19)
- B. Controversy with Pharisees and scribes about “bread” (15:1)
- C. Canaanite woman and the “children’s bread” (15:26)
- A.’ Feeding of the 4,000 with “bread” (15:33, 34, 36)
- B.’ Warning about the Pharisee’s “bread” (16:5-12: 7x)

If this is near correct, then Matthew has highlighted all the more strongly the Canaanite woman’s faith in Jesus, since she alone understands that he can give her “bread.” Anderson suggests a chiasmic structure based on the Gospel’s doublets, with which I find much to agree, both structurally and interpretively. However, the way in which her chiasm focuses on the doublets tends to leave out the more immediate connection with the preceding hand-washing controversy (cf. Janice Capel Anderson, “Double and Triple Stories: The Implied Reader, and Redundancy in Matthew,” *Semeia* 31 [1985]: 75).

¹⁰⁴ Matthew’s change to Mark to say that she “came out” seems to favor interpreting εἰς as “toward,” not “into” (cf. the discussion in Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2: 547-8). See also Dermience, “La Péricope,” 31.

¹⁰⁵ The contrast between the woman and the Jewish leaders is even stronger in 16:1: προσελθόντες οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ Σαδδουκαῖοι πειράζοντες ἐπηρώτησαν αὐτὸν σημεῖον (cf. Janice Capel Anderson, *Matthew’s Narrative Web: Over, and Over, and Over Again* [JSNTSup 91; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994], 122-3, 185).

who come to question/tempt Jesus (15:1; 16:1) – leaves her country to find the “son of David,” and, like the magi, προσεκύνει αὐτῷ (15:25).¹⁰⁶

The contrast the Canaanite woman provides both to Israel’s failure in recognizing its Messiah and the disciples “little faith” sets the christological nuances of 15:21-28 in even bolder relief. Matthew has “narrativized” one of the νήπιοι to whom the Father has, at least partially, revealed his Son (cf. 11:25-7), while the “wise and learned” are bemused, even antagonistic.

Matthew’s re-narration of this account greatly expands on Mark such that the dialogue between the characters commands the reader’s attention more than the miracle itself.¹⁰⁷ The dialogue is structured around the woman’s three christologically significant addresses to Jesus:¹⁰⁸

- A. ἐξελθοῦσα ἔκραζεν λέγουσα· ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαυίδ . . . (22)
 - a. ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῇ λόγον. (23a)
 - x. side dialogue between Jesus and disciples (23b-24)
- B. ἡ δὲ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγουσα· κύριε, βοήθει μοι. (25)
 - b. ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν . . . (26)
- C. ἡ δὲ εἶπεν· ναὶ κύριε . . . (27)
 - c. τότε ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῇ . . . (28)

One immediately notices that the woman’s supplications are the impetus behind each successive step in the story. Her first request (A.) prompts the dialogue with Jesus’ disciples, the details of which we will discuss below as they relate to the point at hand.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Versepunt (“The Role and Meaning,” 535-6), who argues that Israel’s rejection of Jesus in Matt 11-12 centers on his royal, Davidic identity, thus making the Canaanite woman’s confession of him as “son of David” all the more poignant.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Dermience, “La Péricope,” 44-45; J. D. Kingsbury, “Observations on the ‘Miracle Chapters’ of Matthew 8-9,” *CBQ* 40 (1978): 569.

¹⁰⁸ The structuring here is my own. Davies and Allison and Hagner point out “four dyadic units” (cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:541; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 440).

Her second request (B.) raises the dramatic tension of the story, because her unflagging persistence¹⁰⁹ requires of Jesus a direct response: she now approaches him¹¹⁰ in προσκύνησις. She has made herself as conspicuous as possible. Jesus can no longer ignore her, and he must verbalize directly to her what he has spoken as an aside to the disciples. Her third request (C.) leads to the resolution of the story – Jesus responds to her faith with the granting of her request. We will examine each of these requests, focusing especially on her second request (B.).

Her first address to Jesus as κύριε υἱὸς Δαβὶδ echoes a number of other previous pericopes (8:2, 6; esp. 9:27; cf. 20:30-31), but it is particularly surprising here. She is a “Canaanite,” and therefore she would presumably have little interest in – or knowledge of – Israel’s messiah. Not only does her confession echo the magi’s inexplicable recognition of Israel’s messiah (2:2), but also foreshadows her deference to Israel (15:27) by showing her recognition, from the beginning, of Jesus’ particularly Israel-shaped vocation.¹¹¹ Combined with her extraordinary confession of him as “son of David” is the equally-surprising supplication on her lips that also reflects Israel’s liturgical tradition: she cries

¹⁰⁹ As a number of commentators have rightly noted, Matthew’s use of the imperfective tenses for verbs with the Canaanite woman as the subject suggests the continual/iterative nature of her actions.

¹¹⁰ The flow of the passage suggests that the woman was first “crying out” from a distance (15:22). The repetition of the verb ἔκραζεν in 15:22 and 23 (in 23 with ὁπισθεν ἡμῶν), and ἐλθοῦσα (without κράζω) in 15:25 suggest that there is a spatial change with her second request. She is now directly in Jesus’ path.

¹¹¹ Cf. Grundmann: “[W]omit [“son of David”] sie von vornherein Jesu an Israel gerichtete Sendung anerkennt” (*Matthäus*, 376). Cf. also J. P. Meier, “Matthew 15.21-28,” *Int* 40 (1986): 398; Sand, *Matthäus*, 315. Gnika’s and Frankemölle’s contention that here κύριος is a “hellenistic” title and “son of David” a Jewish one falls flat on a number of counts (Gnika, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:30; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:207). Not only does she address Jesus as κύριε in the context of Israel’s Psalmic tradition (15:22, 25), but the broader narrative reinforces the appropriate address of Jesus as “Lord” precisely as Israel’s Messiah (22:43-5). (Frankemölle does connect κύριος with Israel’s Psalm tradition as well, however). “Son of David” here may have more to do with Matthew’s consistent connection between Jesus’ identity as “son of David” and his healing ministry (cf., e.g., David R. Bauer, “The Major Character’s in Matthew’s Story: Their Function and Significance,” in *Gospel Interpretation: Narrative-Critical and Social-Scientific Approaches* [ed. Jack Dean Kingsbury; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1997], 28).

out to the “Lord” in the language of the Psalms: ἐλέησόν με, κύριε υἱὸς Δαβὶδ (cf., e.g., Pss 6:3; 9:13 LXX).¹¹² Ironically, a Canaanite woman uses Israel’s language of worship to implore Jesus while the just-mentioned leaders “worship in vain” (μάτην δὲ σέβονται με, 15:9). Further, the address to Jesus in the language of the Psalms is christologically momentous not simply because it addresses Jesus as Israel addressed its “Lord,” but precisely because it does so in the context of its worship tradition, which leads us to her next address.

The story’s brief aside that explains Jesus’ ignoring of her request and re-affirms his mission to Israel (vv. 23-24; cf. 10:5-6) creates a dramatic tension hitherto unencountered in the narrative. Jesus has refused healing to no one and has even praised the faith of a centurion, commenting on the future ingathering of the nations (8:10-11).¹¹³ Indeed, Jesus’ response is even more befuddling in light of the context in which Matthew has placed this pericope – on the heels of Jesus’ challenge to the leaders’ seemingly pedantic interpretation of purity laws. What Jesus’ response (or lack thereof) creates, narratologically speaking, is an “obstacle,” indeed a seemingly insurmountable one, for the story’s “heroine” to overcome; and, it is an obstacle Matthew erects not only for the woman to overcome and to demonstrate the priority of faith,¹¹⁴ but, along with the various other contrasts noted above, to contrast her humble worship (ἡ δὲ ἐλθοῦσα προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγουσα· κύριε, βοήθει μοι, 15:25) with the “vain worship” (μάτην δὲ σέβονται με, 15:9) of Israel’s leaders in the immediately preceding pericope.

¹¹² Many commentators acknowledge the OT echoes here.

¹¹³ It is true that Matt 8:7 – ἐγὼ ἐλθὼν θεραπεύσω αὐτόν – may express a question rather than an assertion, and thus show Jesus demonstrating reluctance to come to a Gentile’s home. But whether 8:7 is a question remains uncertain, and Jesus’ reluctance is much more overt in 15:21-28.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Sand, *Matthäus*, 315.

The woman's second, more urgent plea entails the same formula we have witnessed earlier: a form of ἔρχομαι + προσκυνέω with an address to Jesus as κύριε and the attributing of remarkable power to him (cf., e.g., 8:2), all of which already point to the "liturgical" tenor of her actions. In this context, however, her actions obtain greater dramatic effect than earlier episodes with the same language, since each aspect of her second request marks a significant change from her initial attempt: she now "approaches" him, προσεκύνη αὐτῷ, and in her address drops the appellation "son of David" (15:22) so as to address him solely as κύριε.¹¹⁵ It is precisely at the point of her προσκύνησις and address of him as κύριε that the story's trajectory decisively shifts – Jesus now addresses her directly. Added to that, her second plea – κύριε, βοήθει μοι – recalls even more clearly than 15:22 a common refrain from Israel's worship tradition of crying out to the κύριος for "help" (LXX: Ps 27:7; 39:14; 43:27; 53:6; 69:6; 86:17; 93:17, 18; 109:26; cf. Isa 44:2; 50:9).¹¹⁶ Once again, the filial κύριος is approached and addressed with the same language Israel used for the paternal κύριος. All of these pertinent details lead us to hear in προσκύνησις the language of "worship," and, further, create a certain dissonance with Israel's "vain worship" in the preceding pericope.

The aura of humble "worship" Matthew's carefully structured dialogue has thus far created stands in marked contrast to the previous pericope wherein Jesus uses the words of Isaiah to chide Israel's leaders:

ὁ λαὸς οὗτος τοῖς χεῖλεσίν με τιμᾷ,

¹¹⁵ The shift to κύριε without "son of David" reflects the same pattern in the two healings of the blind men, who first address Jesus as "Lord, son of David," and when questioned by Jesus, address him as κύριε alone (9.27-8; 20.29, 31). The absolute κύριε heightens the intensity of the appeal. See Anderson ("Double and Triple Stories," 77) for the numerous ways in which these three passages echo one another.

¹¹⁶ Gnllka, *Matthäus*, 2:31; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:340; Nolland, *Matthew*, 633; Meier, "Matthew 15.21-28," 398.

ἡ δὲ καρδία αὐτῶν πόρρω ἀπέχει ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ·
μάτην δὲ σέβονταί με
διδάσκοντες διδασκαλίας ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων (15:8-9)

Despite commentators’ rather sparse attention to the connection between the hand-washing controversy and the Canaanite woman,¹¹⁷ there are at least four noteworthy links between the two. First, we saw above that Jesus’ “departure” (15:21) recalls the threatening nature of the Jerusalem leaders’ inquiry in the previous passage (15:1). He is driven away from Galilee toward Tyre and Sidon, which establishes a pronounced contrast between Jesus’ experience in Israel and his experience in – or at least near – Gentile territory.

Second, “this people” (ὁ λαὸς οὗτος) in 15:8 recalls the double-edged theme of “the people” (ὁ λαός) throughout the Gospel (1:21; 2:4; 2:6; 4:16; 4:23; 13:15, etc.). Throughout the narrative, marginal characters consistently serve as foils for unbelieving Israel and the “little faith” disciples.¹¹⁸ In 15:24, Jesus echoes this larger theme and his more recent prophetic pronouncement against Israel’s leaders in 15:7-9 when stating his reason for ignoring the Canaanite woman: οὐκ ἀπεστάλην εἰ μὴ εἰς τὰ πρόβατα τὰ ἀπολωλότα οἴκου Ἰσραὴλ. This “lost sheep” saying not only recalls the same phrase in 10:6, but also finds its most immediate explication in the obstinate “people” of 15:8. Ironically, while in 15:24 he is “seeking the lost sheep of Israel,” it is a Canaanite woman who comes to him and worships, which leads to our third point.

¹¹⁷ Many give more attention to the parallels between this account and, e.g., the healing of the centurion’s servant (8:5-13). Davies and Allison even say that Matthew has no concern “with any thematic connection between 15.1-20 and 21-8” (*Matthew*, 2:548). Considering Matthew’s literary patterns, this seems *prima facie* highly unlikely.

¹¹⁸ J. D. Kinsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 27.

Third, then, the liturgical language of 15:9 – σέβονταιί με (Isa 29:13 LXX) – finds its parallel in Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in 15:25, which he has changed from Mark: προσέπεσεν πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ (7:25). Matthew retains σέβω from Mark 7:7 and the LXX of Isaiah 29:13, but it should not be missed that σέβω and προσκυνέω could, given the proper contextual setting, be used interchangeably (cf., e.g., Bel 4-5; Jos. *Ant.* 3:91; 4:137; 9:255; *Sib. Or.* 3:29-30; *Mart. Poly.* 17:3).¹¹⁹ The shared imagery between those who “vainly worship” in 15:8-9 and “lost Israel” in 15:24 stands diametrically opposed to the humble “worship” of the “Canaanite” (15:22; 25).

Fourth, on a broader literary-structural scale, the story of the Canaanite woman is the third in a series of passages wherein “worship” is a central concern. In the pericope preceding the hand-washing controversy, 14:22-33, the disciples’ encounter with the water-walking and storm-stilling Jesus leads them to offer him προσκύνησις as the “Son of God” (14:33). We will discuss this passage at length below, but it is worth noting now that Matthew has changed Mark’s ending significantly (6:51-2) in order to include the disciples’ “worship” as the climax of the episode. In three pericopes in a row – storm-stilling, hand-washing, and the Canaanite woman – Matthew has specifically (and uniquely among the synoptists) drawn out the issue of “worship.” As a result, the role that “worship” plays in each of these three successive passages suggests that the “sandwiched” hand-washing passage, accentuating the “vain worship” of the Jerusalem

¹¹⁹ As is often noted, Matthew retains OT quotations from Mark largely unchanged, which by and large follow the LXX (cf. Graham Stanton, “Matthew,” in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture: Essays in Honor of Barnabas Lindars* [eds. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988], 210-13).

leaders, should be read in contrast to the true worship of the disciples and the Canaanite woman.¹²⁰

Reading with the grain of Matthew's literary arrangement further reinforces the christological momentum the narrative has been building behind the term προσκυνέω. On the narrative level, Israel's "vain worship" of their God can be directly contrasted with the προσκύνησις offered to the one whom the disciples address as "Son of God" and the Canaanite woman as "Lord." The innovative literary and christological move, then, is that Matthew has set up a foil for Israel's vain worship in the Canaanite's (and disciples') worship of *Jesus*, the son of David and filial κύριος.

Rounding out our discussion we return briefly to 15:21-28. When one arrives at the woman's final reply and rejoinder to Jesus – ναὶ κύριε, κτλ. (15:28) – her address of him as "Lord" takes on decidedly more christological significance than in the Markan parallel (7:28), since it carries all the overtones of the foregoing dialogue. Whereas her second address clearly evokes the language and action of Israel's worship, the third address mirrors more closely her first address in its deference to Israel. In 15:22, she addressed Jesus as "Lord, son of David," implicitly granting his particularly Israel-shaped vocation. Likewise, in 15:27 she says: ναὶ κύριε, καὶ γὰρ τὰ κυνάρια ἐσθίει ἀπὸ τῶν ψιγίων τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τῶν κυρίων αὐτῶν.

¹²⁰ Even though the Canaanite woman is a foil for the "little faith" disciples, both she and the disciples nonetheless share the characteristic of "faith," while the Jewish leadership has rejected Jesus. After having worked on this passage, I found that David Howell comes to similar general conclusions as mine above – the contrast between the Canaanite woman and the disciples/Jerusalem leadership in the preceding and succeeding passages. However, he does not make the explicit connection with the "worship" motif (David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* [JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990], 142-4).

Importantly, Matthew has changed Mark's "children" (παιδίων, 7:28) to "lords" (κυρίων), which has a double effect. First, it both reiterates the woman's consent to Jesus' statement in v.26 and also reinforces her reflection of Israel's scriptural tradition already echoed in her use of Psalmic language – the Gentiles receive the benefits of salvation only through the Jews.¹²¹ Second, her third address of Jesus as κύριε at the same time creates a verbal resonance between Jesus' identity and Israel's – he is the κύριος of the κυρίων, which, in Matthew's idiom, could suggest either Israel's Lord God (e.g., 4:10; 11:25), or the "king of the Jews" (2:2), the one whom David calls κύριος (22:43-5). As we have seen already, however, both in this pericope and the previous ones, Jesus' identity as (1) the κύριος who (2) receives supplicatory προσκύνησις, which is (3) couched in the OT's language of prayer to Israel's κύριος, and (4) set in counterpoint to Israel's "vain worship," serves the interpretive point we have been seeking to make: *this* son of David is bound up with the identity of Israel's Lord in such a way that deciding between the two options forces a dichotomy where the narrative yields dialectical unity.¹²²

That dialectical unity will be the focus of our next two chapters as we explore 14:22-33 and Matthew's paternal-filial language. Nonetheless, we briefly note here how closely tied 15:21-28 is to that broader narrative-theological logic that would assign the

¹²¹ Cf. Schlatter, *Matthäus*, 490-91; Nolland, *Matthew*, 635.

¹²² It is worth noting again the dramatic irony running through this section of the narrative. On the story level, the Canaanite woman does not have the same depth of knowledge about Jesus that the reader has, and therefore, her προσκύνησις bears a certain ambiguity – is this "worship" of the Son of God (as in 14:33) or simply reverential deference to one in whom she recognizes the power of healing? On a the story level, the latter is certainly more likely and the inherent ambiguity in προσκυνέω language retains something of the "pastness" of the story. On the readerly level, however, Matthew has shaped the language of this account and the context in which it occurs in order to form the reader's sensibilities about true and false worship, the substance of which turns on one's perception of and identification with Jesus.

προσκύνησις due to the Lord God to the “Lord, son of David.” Matthew, that is, has narrated the Canaanite woman’s response to κύριος Jesus as the foil to the Jerusalem leaders who embody the principle articulated in 15:13: *πᾶσα φυτεία ἣν οὐκ ἐφύτευσεν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ οὐράνιος ἐκριζωθήσεται* (15:13; cf. 13:29-30, 36-43). The paternal-filial language here (ὁ πατήρ μου) again re-activates Jesus’ all-important pronouncement in 11:25-27: only the Father knows the Son and reveals him at his pleasure.¹²³

While the Jerusalem leaders, therefore, instantiate the principle of 15:13, the Canaanite woman embodies its closely related counterpart in 11:25-27: the Son has been revealed to her; unlike the Pharisees, she *is* one whom “my Father has planted,” precisely because she has responded in humble submission to and faith in Israel’s Messiah. We should notice how tightly the thread between 15:13 and 11:25-7 is woven: in both passages it is the distinctly filial language that articulates the new shape of God’s people; it is the Father’s design to bring worshippers to his Son.

Lest one consider our focus on Jesus’ divine-filial identity strained at this point and the link with 11:25-7 in 15:13 too subtle, four “intratextual” factors should be kept in mind. First, there is no counterpart to 15:13 in Mark’s account; Matthew has woven into the hand-washing pericope another “filialized” statement about the Father’s sovereign

¹²³ The saying parallel to Matt 15:13 in Luke 6:39 does not include the statement about “my Father’s” planting. Further, In 15:13, the Matthean Jesus problematizes the common OT and Second Temple image of Israel as YHWH’s “planting” (cf., e.g., Isa 5:1-7; 60:21; 61:3; *Pss. Sol.* 14:3-5), much as he does in the parable of the wicked tenants, which likewise turns on Jesus’ filial identity (21:33-45); cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:25; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:333; Gundry, *Matthew*, 307. Importantly, however, Jesus’ polemic in 15:13 is directed toward the Pharisees, not Israel as such, again closely paralleling the parable of the wicked tenants (esp. 21:45). To say that in Matthew the Father reshapes his people around his Son is not the same as saying he has rejected Israel.

will over his people's identity (cf., e.g., 7:21; 11:25-7).¹²⁴ Second, in 15:12 the disciples say the Pharisees “were scandalized” (ἐσκανδαλίσθησαν), evoking Jesus' makarism in 11:6 (σκανδαλισθῆ) and the climactic *Jubelruf* that explains why Jesus has been rejected – Father and Son sovereignly reveal one another at their pleasure (11:25-7).¹²⁵ That logic is again at work in 15:1-28. Third, elsewhere in the narrative, in light of similar rejection by Israel's leaders Jesus redefines God's people and his “siblings” as “those who do the will of my *Father* in heaven” (12:50; cf. 7:21, 24). Belonging to the Father means recognizing and following the Son. Fourth, one also need look only in the passage preceding the hand-washing controversy, which we argued above is connected to the 15:1-28 through the topic of “worship.” There, in their moment of greatest clarity thus far, the disciples “worship” (προσκύνησαν) Jesus as “Son of God” (14:33).

As we have suggested above, the logic of Matthew's “worship” language for Jesus is deeply embedded in Jesus' unique filial relation to the Father. This leads us to discuss the last, and perhaps most decisive, προσκυνέω text we will consider – 14:22-33.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ By the admittedly horrible word “filialized” I am attempting to articulate the way in which Jesus' constant reference to God as ὁ πατήρ μου in Matthew's Gospel reinforces the narrative's insistence on God's identity as the Father-in-relation-to-the-Son. See further in chapter 5.

¹²⁵ Cf. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 319; Gundry, *Matthew* 14-28, 436.

¹²⁶ In the interest of space, we will not discuss at length Matthew's use of προσκυνέω in 20:20. A detailed discussion would only further confirm the pattern we have seen. For example, Matthew has placed the mother's request and προσκύνῃς before Jesus on the heels of Jesus' claim that, ὅταν καθίσῃ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπὶ θρόνου δόξης αὐτοῦ, καθήσεσθε καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ (19:28). Of the three synoptists, only Matthew retains both this claim to the future throne and the mother's subsequent request: εἰπὲ ἵνα καθίσωσιν οὗτοι οἱ δύο υἱοὶ μου εἰς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἰς ἐξ εὐωνύμων σου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ σου (20:21). Thus, her approach in προσκύνῃς to prepare for such a request should be read in light of the claim Jesus has just made – he is the glorious Son of Man who will rule over all things, with his twelve disciples judging “the twelve tribes” (19:28; cf. 25:31ff; 26:64; 28:18).

CHAPTER 4

Matt 14:22-33 – Worshipping the Son

I. Introduction

Perhaps we should have begun our study of προσκυνέω with 14:33, since, as Pesch says, “Das matthäische Verständnis von προσκυνέω wird 14,33 vollends klar.”¹ Further, nearly every modern translation and commentator interprets the disciples’ προσκύνησις of Jesus in 14:33 as “worship.” Four considerations suggest, however, that 14:22-33 should serve as the climax of our discussion of προσκυνέω.

First, we have proceeded on the conviction that Matthew’s narrative not only presupposes a certain readerly competence (e.g., knowledge of the OT, ability to read Greek, etc.), but in fact builds a readerly competence through the way in which it uses words, literary structures, Israel’s Scripture, etc.² We have sought therefore to enter that narrative world largely by tracing the patterns that reveal its own internal logic, which yield insight into the interpretive problem noted in the introduction and elsewhere, viz., the conflicting scholarly interpretations of προσκυνέω and the “ungrammaticality” in Matthew’s use of that term. More specifically, we noted not only the differing interpretations of προσκυνέω, but also that the question of the identity of God in Matthew gains particular poignancy around this term. If, following Israel’s tradition, Matthew affirms that only the “Lord God” is to receive προσκύνησις (4:10; cf. 18:26), how and why does Matthew consistently use this terminology repeatedly for Jesus, especially in

¹ Rudolph Pesch, “Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog (Mt 1-2). Beobachtungen zu den Zitationsformeln der Reflexionszitate,” *Bib* 48 (1967): 415.

² On “readerly competence,” see Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 52; idem, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1979), 7-8.

christologically provocative settings? As we will see, 14:22-33 opens a unique hermeneutical space for engaging that question more directly through Matthew's paternal and filial language (chpt. 5).

Second, despite the fact that the vast majority of scholars note 14:22-33's repeated christological re-appropriation of the OT's language of theophany, such observations frequently do not significantly reshape their articulations of Jesus' identity in Matthew, much less the identity of Israel's God. For example, while Davies and Allison, in characteristically detailed fashion, demonstrate the constant OT theophanic allusions in 14:22-33, even saying at one point that "it must be emphasized that the parallels in our passage are between Jesus and Yahweh, not Jesus and Moses," they conclude that "Jesus' action makes him the *channel* of divine power and authority" (emphasis added).³ Or, to take another example, Hagner concludes that "God is present uniquely in Jesus," and "[h]ere, 'the Son of God' is probably understood by the disciples as the unique messenger of God, God's messianic agent."⁴ Such reversions to agency language, which leaves the definition of "God" or "divinity" in Matthew unaffected by the narrative's christological pressure, flattens the complex contours of passages like

³ Cf. W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988-97), 2:504 n. 32 and 510. I am not exactly clear about the upshot of Davies' and Allison's interpretation of 14:22-33. They make the statement mentioned above, along with similar ones (cf. 2:502, 506), but also say at one point, "[T]he powers of deity have become incarnate in God's Son" (504), and "[I]t does not quite suffice to say that, for our author, God has acted through Jesus the Messiah. It seems more accurate to assert that, in Matthew's gospel, God actively shares attributes characteristic of himself with another, his Son" (2:512).

⁴ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* [WBC 33B; Dallas: Word Books, 1995], 423, 424. He goes on to interpret προσκυνέω in v. 33 as "worship." But how, if the disciples only see him as "God's messianic agent," is it coherent with Matthew's narrative that they "worship" Jesus?

14:22-33 and of the narrative as a whole.⁵ Further, it renders the interpretation of προσκυνέω in 14:33 as “worship” incoherent on a narrative-theological level. While Pesch’s comment above may be correct, much commentary on this passage has yet to explore adequately what 14:22-33 accomplishes *christologically* with regard to Matthew’s *theological* grammar.

Third, προσκυνέω in 14:22-33 bears a unique literary-christological significance in Matthew’s narrative. While identifying hermeneutically significant numerical patterns can be a relatively subjective endeavor, there does seem to be a pattern to Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω that may further suggest the centrality of its use in 14:33.⁶ It is already well-established that Matthew “plays” with numbers, illustrated in a few examples: the genealogy, divided into three sets of fourteen generations and (possibly) structured on a gematria-type reading of David’s name; three temptations; the fourteen triads of the Sermon on the Mount;⁷ the use of sets of three for Jesus’ miracles (e.g., 8:1-17); ten “mighty works” (8:1-9:34);⁸ five discourses; doubling of episodes or characters; seven

⁵ For similar “agency” interpretations, cf., e.g., Carter: “To name him God’s son is to recognize him as the agent God has commissioned to reveal God’s saving presence and empire, and who enjoys a special relationship with God” (*Matthew and the Margins*, 312); Collins and Collins: “God [reveals] the son to the disciples by enabling Jesus to make the wind cease” (Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human, and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature* [Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008], 141 n.72); Heil: “Jesus has revealed and performed the will of God to save his people in the concrete situation of the disciples’ distress. As the agent of this divine revelation Jesus has shown himself to be in the Son-Father relationship to God” (J. P. Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea* [AnBib 87; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1981], 67).

⁶ While the suggestion which follows is not determinative for the importance of 14:33 in Matthew’s narrative, it may nonetheless contribute to further grasping 14:33’s centrality.

⁷ Cf. Glen H. Stassen, “The Fourteen Triads of the Sermon on the Mount,” *JBL* 122 (2003): 267-308; cf. also Dale C. Allison, Jr., “The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning,” in idem, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 173-215.

⁸ Cf. Frank J. Matera, “The Plot of Matthew’s Gospel,” *CBQ* 49 (1987): 247.

parables (13:1-52); seven woes (23:13-36).⁹ Such patterns suggest both a careful crafting of his narrative and also the likelihood of other such patterns for important motifs.

Further, we have already seen Matthew's strategic literary placement of προσκυνέω throughout the narrative (see the discussions of 2:2-12; 4:9-10; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25).

It is, therefore, important to observe the following points regarding Matthew's use of προσκυνέω and its relation to 14:22-33.

A. Matthew uses προσκυνέω ten times for Jesus, in seven discrete episodes – the magi (2:1-12, 3x), the leper (8:1-4, 1x), the ruler's daughter (9:18-26, 1x), the sea-walking episode (14:33, 1x), the Canaanite woman (15:21-28, 1x), James' and John's mother (20:20-23, 1x), and the resurrection account (28:9, 17, 2x).¹⁰ Both the numbers ten and seven have long been recognized as theologically significant numbers in early Jewish writing, and it seems no different for Matthew, as seen from the examples above.

B. The προσκύνησις of 14:33 occurs as the center episode in a numerically significant position – in three episodes beforehand and three episodes afterward Jesus receives προσκύνησις. More, the sea-walking episode occurs at nearly the

⁹ For a helpful survey and discussion, cf. R. T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 128-33; also, Floyd V. Filson, "Broken Patterns in the Gospel of Matthew," *JBL* 75 (1956): 227-231 (esp. 228). Note, however, that Filson goes on to problematize some of the issues related to patterning in Matthew's Gospel, though he does not deny the importance of some numerical patterns to the narrative.

¹⁰ Though προσκυνέω occurs three times in the magi narrative, and twice in the resurrection narrative, they occur in what amount to singular episodes – Jesus is worshiped as the infant king and as the risen Lord.

center of the narrative itself.¹¹ As we will see below, it provides a unique connecting point between the narrative's introduction and prologue.

C. There is an episode where Matthew has otherwise inexplicably *excluded* the use of προσκυνέω. In the healing of the “epileptic” boy with the demon in Matthew 17:14-20, the text reads: Καὶ ἐλθόντων πρὸς τὸν ὄχλον προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπος γονυπετῶν αὐτὸν (17:14). Matthew's use of γονυπετῶν here is striking. He has taken over this text from Mark (9:14-29); except for failing to use προσκυνέω, he has modified it to fit the pattern of his other healing episodes – the man demonstrates complete trust in Jesus by falling before him, addressing him as “Lord” (κύριε), and begging for mercy (17:14-15). In Mark, the man neither kneels, nor addresses Jesus as Lord, nor displays much confidence in his ability to heal (9:14, 17, 22). Matthew has, in other words, shaped 17:14-15 linguistically to mirror the healing of the leper, the healing of the leader's daughter, etc. Yet, instead of using προσκυνέω, he has used γονυπετέω, a term he *never* uses elsewhere for such episodes, and uses only one other time.¹² Such a move commends our suggestion above – Matthew has designed seven

¹¹ Cf. J. Martin C. Scott, “Jesus Walking on the Sea: The Significance of Matthew 14, 22-23 for the Narrative Development of the Gospel,” in *Narrativity in Biblical and Related Texts: La Narrativité dans la Bible et les Textes Apparentés* (eds. G. J. Brooke and J. D. Kaestli; BETL 149; Leuven, Peeters, 2000), 93, 101.

¹² The only other time Matthew uses γονυπετέω is for the soldier's mocking of Jesus (27.29), where he has actually changed one of Mark's two uses of προσκυνέω (15.19; for the other, see Mark 5.6/Matt 8.28, another episode where a “negative” figure bows before Jesus). As Pesch noted some time ago, Matthew reserves προσκυνέω for those who approach Jesus sincerely/in faith (Rudolph Pesch, “Der Gottessohn im matthäischen Evangelienprolog (Mt 1-2). Beobachtungen zu den Zitationsformeln der Reflexionszitate,” *Bib* 48 [1967]: 415)

episodes and ten uses of προσκύνησις for Jesus, with 14:33 occurring at the center of those seven episodes.¹³

D. The προσκύνησις in 14:33 is the only time in the entire narrative this action is accompanied by what amounts to a confession of Jesus' identity. While we will explore this point in further detail below, here we simply register that in all other προσκύνησις-episodes that include an address to Jesus, the purpose of the address is not so much to confess his identity, but rather to appeal to him, whether as "Lord," "son of David," or both.¹⁴ In 14:33, προσκυνέω is not accompanied by supplication, but simply with a declaration of who he is, Son of God. More, it is the first time the disciples (1) confess Jesus as "Son of God" (θεοῦ υἱός) and (2) render him προσκυνήσις. The double occurrence of two such significant events – and that for the first time in the narrative – points to the interpretive significance of this passage.¹⁵

These observations suggest 14:22-33 deserves extended treatment for grasping the grammar of προσκυνέω in Matthew's broader theological grammar. To this task we now turn.

¹³ Note also that Matthew has eliminated Mark's comment about the hemorrhaging woman's reaction to her healing – προσέπεσεν αὐτῷ – rather than changing it to προσκυνέω (Mark 5:33/Matt 9:22; cf. Luke 8:47).

¹⁴ As we have argued above, there is of course christological significance to those places where Jesus is addressed as "Lord" or "son of David," but it is more indirect than in the disciples' confession in 14:33, since the broader context of those other episodes is one of petition.

¹⁵ Only at the resurrection do the disciples render Jesus προσκυνήσις again (28:17; see chpt 2 above).

II. Matt 14:22-33 in its Literary Setting

Coming to 14:22-33 itself, it would be redundant to give a detailed argument for the numerous OT theophanic elements in this passage that are directly appropriated in Jesus' speech and actions. Heil's study definitively demonstrates the rich OT/Jewish context of the passage.¹⁶ One is hard-pressed to find a modern commentary that fails to discuss what we might call the extensive "YHWH-typology" that runs throughout the text: Jesus' coming in the fourth watch of the night, YHWH's time of salvation (14:24/Exod 14:24); the double emphasis on Jesus' walking on the water, a unique prerogative of YHWH (14:25 & 26/Job 9:8; Ps 77:19; Isa 43:16; Hab 3:15); Jesus' reassurance to the disciples by speaking the "divine revelation formula" (for himself) and the command not to fear (14:27/Gen 15:1; Deut 32:39; Judg 6:23; Isa 41:4, 13; 43:10, etc.); the effective power of Jesus' command (14:29/Ps 33:9; Job 38:16; Isa 55:10-11; Wis 16:12); Peter's cry to Jesus as the Psalmist's cry to YHWH for salvation from the waters (14:30/LXX Ps 69:1-3; 143:7); Jesus' saving "hand" as the saving hand of YHWH (14:31/Exod 7:5; LXX Ps 143:7); the stilling of storms as that which was YHWH's domain alone (14:32/LXX 89:8; 107:29).¹⁷ There is broad agreement that many of these OT allusions serve as the appropriate encyclopedia within which to read 14:22-33, rendering unlikely the claim that this account reflects "Hellenistic" concerns.¹⁸ Rather,

¹⁶ Heil, *Jesus Walking*, 17-66.

¹⁷ For later Jewish literature treating similar themes, cf., e.g., 4Q 169 1+2, 1-3; 1QH VI, 22-25-25; 4Q38 I, 5; *1 En.* 101.1-8; *Pss Sol* 2.28-30; *T. Naph.* 6.1-10; 3 Macc 2.6-8.

¹⁸ Cf., e.g., Reinhart Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium* (BevT 33; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1963), 115. Similarly to Hummel, Cullman says, "In his investigation of the Son of God passages in the Synoptic Gospels J. Bieneck comes to the conclusion, therefore, that they give a 'completely un-Greek picture' of the Son of God. The only story in which Jesus is called 'Son of God' in a sense which corresponds to the Hellenistic concept is Matthew's version of Jesus' walking on the sea" (Oscar Cullman, *The Christology of the New Testament* [trans.

we will have to understand how the narrative can depict Jesus in the way it does in 14:22-33 *within* the context of the narrative's commitment to Israel's confession of the one God.

Our main focus, therefore, will be on a number of literary elements and sometimes-overlooked OT passages that have influenced Matthew's account. We will see reason to complexify significantly the "agency" interpretation noted above, since the Son likewise receives the προσκύνησις reserved for Israel's κύριος.

We begin, as usual, by considering the literary context of 14:22-33 and its resonances with the rest of the narrative. While 14:22-33 clearly serves as a counterpart to the stilling of the storm in 8:23-27,¹⁹ its connection with the preceding event of the feeding of the 5,000 is less evident. Jesus' withdrawal by himself in 14:23 resumes his attempt to do so in 14:13, but Matthew has removed the comment in Mark that would have tied 14:22-33 more closely to the feeding (cf. Mark 6:51-2). Indeed, Matthew has narrated 14:22-33 as something of a "pause"²⁰ in the narrative, an explicatory intrusion that brings together several previous strands and prepares the reader for several strands to come. Interpreting 14:22-33 in this way makes sense of several elements that have puzzled interpreters.

Shirley C. Gurthrie and Charles A. M. Hall; 2d ed; London: SCM Press, 1963], 277). Besides the fact that Matt 14:22-33 is thoroughly shaped by the OT, is it likely that "Son of God" throughout Matthew is "completely un-Greek," but suddenly becomes "Greek" in 14:33?

¹⁹ As recognized by most commentators and which goes back at least to John Chrysostom (*Hom. Matt. L. 2. [NPNF 10:550]*); cf., e.g., Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* (3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress), 2:317.

²⁰ "Pause" is perhaps not quite the right word. *Interfatio* may be better in that what occurs in 14:22-33 "interrupts" the otherwise continuous flow of the narrative. Not until the resurrection do the disciples again render Jesus προσκύνησις (though cf. 17:6; see below).

First, rather than a premature recognition of Jesus' divine sonship by the disciples – thereby rendering Peter's confession in 16:16 narratively awkward²¹ – it is preparatory and exegetical of that episode. Matt 14:33 both demonstrates narratively that although the disciples are of "little faith," they *are* making progress in their understanding (note the progression from 8:27 to 14:33 to 16:16),²² and also makes sense of Peter's confession and Jesus' response. Peter can confess Jesus as Messiah, Son of God, because the Father has revealed him as such in the Son's Lordship over the chaotic waters.

Second, it serves to answer the same question raised repeatedly thus far in the narrative – the question of Jesus' identity. Matt 14:33 furnishes a direct response to the disciples' question in 8:27 after Jesus' stilling of the storm (ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν); yet it also answers the similar question of John's disciples (11:3), the crowds (12:23), and Jesus' hometown (13:55).²³ This last example, 13:55, is perhaps the most relevant (and most narratively proximate), as can be seen in the similar syntax between 13:55 and 14:33:

13:55: οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός;²⁴

14:33: ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ. (cf. 27:54)²⁵

²¹ Cf., e.g., Cullman, *Christology*, 277 n. 3; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 571.

²² Cf. Janice Capel Anderson, "Double and Triple Stories: The Implied Reader, and Redundancy in Matthew," *Semeia* 31 (1985): 73; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 424. On the "Steigerung" from 14:33 to 16:16, see the still trenchant comments by D. Johannes Horst, *Proskynein: Zur Anbetung im Urschientum nach ihrer religionsgeschichtlichen Eigenart* (NTF 3/2; Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1932), 231-2.

²³ Cf. David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 158; Hubert Frankemölle, *Matthäus Kommentar* (2 vols; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994), 2:198.

²⁴ Note Matthew's change to Mark 6:3: οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τέκτων, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας. For Matthew, the question of Jesus' authority turns on his *paternity* (cf. Donald Verseput, "The Role and Meaning of the 'Son of God' Title in Matthew's Gospel," *NTS* 33 [1987]: 554, n. 62).

In each instance the fronting of the genitive modifier highlights the question of paternal identity, which of course defines Jesus' filial identity.²⁶ He is not the *carpenter's* son, he is *God's* Son.²⁷ The syntax of 14:33 emphasizes the nature of Jesus' sonship even more strongly than 13:55 by fronting the entire predicate nominative along with its genitive modifier.²⁸ In answering these questions through the disciples' confession in 14:33,

²⁵ Most commentators argue that the anarthrous θεοῦ υἱός is definite ("the Son of God"), which certainly could be the case, since elsewhere in the narrative Jesus as "Son" is obviously definite (e.g. 3:17; 11:27; 17:5). The other definite uses would support a "definite" interpretation of θεοῦ υἱός in 14:33 that accords with Colwell's rule (definite pre-verbal predicate nominatives are usually anarthrous; E. C. Colwell, "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament," *JBL* 52 [1933]: 20). However, it seems to me that the anarthrous θεοῦ υἱός in 14:33 functions better here as *qualitative* for three reasons. One, Matthew elsewhere uses the arthrous form, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (16:16; 26:63), which suggests that variance in his construction is significant. Two, Philip Harner argued convincingly that much more frequently than not anarthrous pre-verbal predicate nominatives are primarily qualitative, though the definite or indefinite notion may be secondarily in view ("Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15:39 and John 1:1," *JBL* 92 [1973]: 75-87). Three, in 8:27 (which, as noted, Matthew answers in 14:33), Matthew has changed Mark's sentence – τίς ἄρα οὗτός ἐστιν ὅτι καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος καὶ ἡ θάλασσα ὑπακούει αὐτῷ; (4:41) – to read, ποταπός ἐστιν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν; Matthew's ποταπός focuses on the "class or kind" of person Jesus is (cf. Walter Bauer and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* [3d. ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000], 856). Thus, a qualitative reading of the anarthrous θεοῦ υἱός in 14:33 answers Matthew's ποταπός quite nicely – Jesus is set apart in "kind" from all other people on account of his unique divine-filial identity (not unlike the anarthrous, qualitative ἐν υἱῷ of Heb 1:2). This, of course, does not exclude the "definite" interpretation, but shifts the focus to the kind of filial identity in view (cf. Levinsohn's description of substantives that are "qualitative with a unique referential identity"; Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* [2d ed.; Dallas: SIL International, 2000], 149).

²⁶ Matthew further evokes the contrast between the crowd's perception and the readers' knowledge of Jesus' divine sonship with his slight modification to Mark 6:2 in 13:56: πόθεν οὖν τοῦτο ταῦτα πάντα, which recalls Jesus' declaration in 11:27: Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μου.

²⁷ Cf. 4:3, 6; 8:29; 16:16; 26:63; 27:40, which all read (ὁ) υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (cf. Robert L. Mowery, "Subtle Differences: The Matthean 'Son of God' References," *NovT* 32 [1990]: 193, 198). Further intensifying the antithetical relationship between the Nazareth episode and the sea-walking episode is that at Nazareth Jesus obliquely refers to himself as a "prophet" (13:57), a true but obviously insufficient designation for Jesus in Matthew, and one which is consistent with the crowds' limited perception of his identity (16:14; 21:46; cf. 11:25). To the disciples, however, Jesus is revealed as "Son of God" (14:33), a revelation given only by the Father (11:27; 16:17); cf. Luis Sánchez Navarro, "La Filiación de Cristo en el Evangelio de Mateo," in *Filiación II: Cultura Pagana, Religión de Israel, Orígenes del Cristianismo* (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 2007), 207-8.

²⁸ Matthew follows a similar (though not exactly parallel) syntax in 22:45: εἰ οὖν Δαυὶδ καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον, πῶς υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστιν; Similar to 14:33, the predicate nominative υἱὸς αὐτοῦ occurs before the verb, thus receiving emphasis and problematizing Jesus' Davidic sonship, while emphasizing his divine sonship (cf. 22:42). Interestingly, Matthew has changed Mark's word order, αὐτοῦ ἐστιν υἱός (12:37), to υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστιν. Matthew's order, though not fronting the genitive (as in 13:55 and 14:33), has the double effect of (1) bringing κύριος and υἱός into closer syntactic relationship, which underscores Jesus' filial status as

Matthew follows a pattern already established in the narrative (and one which he will continue), namely, “vertical” or “heavenly” intrusions into the horizontal plane of the narrative for the purpose of revealing Jesus’ divine-filial identity despite evidence to the contrary.

For example, in 3:17 the Father affirms his Son despite his humble submission to baptism and John’s incredulity; in 11:25-7 Jesus re-affirms his Sonship in light of vast rejection (11:20-24); in 17:5 the Father again affirms his Son despite the ignominious death he has just portended, which Peter roundly rejects (16:21-23); in the parable of the wicked tenants Jesus reaffirms his filial identity despite the portended rejection by Israel’s leaders (21:33-44); and, despite his execution, the centurion confesses Jesus’ divine-filial identity in the same language as the disciples (27:54/14:33). Thus, the disciples’ worship and confession in 14:33 serves a similar literary-theological end: it re-asserts the Father’s evaluative point of view despite the large scale rejection of (or confusion about) Jesus’ identity in the immediately preceding episodes (e.g., 11:16-24; 12:23, 24-32, 38; 13:13-15; 13:54-58; 14:1-2). The repeated “intrusions” into the narrative that identify Jesus re-align the reader’s perception constantly with that of the Father despite what looks like a contradiction of Jesus’ divine sonship; rather, Matthew contends, it is the Father’s point of view on his Son that carries the day.²⁹ It remains, however, for us to discuss more specifically what Matthew means by “Son of God” (θεοῦ υἱός), which we will do below.

κύριος, and (2) as mentioned, highlights the question about Jesus’ particularly *filial* identity by placing it before the equative verb. We discuss 22:41-46 further in chapter 5.

²⁹ Cf. Jack Dean Kingsbury, “The Figure of Jesus in Matthew’s Story: A Literary-Critical Probe,” *JSNT* 21 (1984): 3-36.

Third – continuing our analysis of this scene as a “pause” in the story to draw together important narrative strands – the use of προσκυνέω in 14:33 carries a different emphasis than the uses we have seen in the body of the narrative, while it stands in continuity with the προσκύνησις of the magi (2:2, 11) and those who see the resurrected Jesus (28:9, 17).³⁰ It is more akin, that is, to those instances of προσκυνέω in the narrative frame. In accord with the narrative time discussed earlier, human characters very rarely recognize the full truth of Jesus’ identity during his “state of humiliation.” Even in those instances where characters address Jesus as “Lord” and render him προσκύνησις (e.g., 8:2; 15:25, etc.), there is a heavy dose of dramatic irony at play. It is not clear whether on the story level the character realizes the full christological import of what he/she is doing/saying, even though Matthew has made the significance of their action manifest to the reader. Still, these characters never address Jesus as “Son of God,” and, further, they do not “worship” Jesus as a response to *who* he is.³¹

Not so 14:33. Unlike all of the uses of προσκυνέω for Jesus from his baptism to his death, but very much like 2:11 and 28:9/17, in 14:33 the disciples fall before Jesus as a response to his identity, here, as the filial κύριος who rescues from the chaotic waters.

In sum, just as the frame of the Gospel provides the interpretive grid within which Jesus’ messianic ministry is comprehended, so also 14:22-33 serves as the syndetic episode that connects beginning to end in unbroken continuity. In the midst of his rejection by the uncomprehending (e.g. 13:1-17, 53-58), it re-anchors the reader in what

³⁰ Cf., e.g., Mark Allan Powell, “A Typology of Worship in the Gospel of Matthew,” *JSNT* 57 (1995): 14. Note that only in 14:31-33 and 28:17 do doubt (διστάζω) and worship (προσκυνέω) come together.

³¹ When a human character *does* articulate Jesus’ identity accurately, Matthew uses it to illustrate the rarity and uniqueness of that recognition (16:16-17) – indeed, so much so that Peter is given a unique place in the future life of the Church (though, of course, the interpretation of 16:17-20 is widely debated).

is true of him. For the disciples, it illuminates their perception of Jesus' identity in a manner heretofore opaque to them, which issues in their προσκύνησις of him as "Son of God."

III. Matt 14:22-33: Literary Structure & Intertextuality

Turning more specifically to the passage, we will analyze its literary qualities, which will confirm our interpretation that Jesus – as the filial κύριος – is not simply the "revealer of the Father,"³² but in fact shares in the identity, and therefore the worship, of the Israel's κύριος ὁ θεός. As several scholars have noticed, 14:22-33 is structured in a concentric pattern,³³ which underscores the christological importance of this passage in the flow of Matthew's narrative:

The admittedly complex concentric structure below results from Matthew's embedding of a second miracle story (Peter's sea-walking) within the larger sea-walking/storm-stilling miracle, the former of which Matthew has narrated to correspond in several places to the latter. I have put in bold and added Arabic numerals to the correspondences between the two miracle stories, whereas I have underlined those points of correspondence in the larger chiastic pattern.³⁴ In what follows I attempt to show that a number of important patterns are indeed present and integral to interpreting the passage.

³² Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:510.

³³ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:317; John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 597; cf. also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:496, 507.

³⁴ There is overlap between the two because Peter's water-walking creates something of a pattern within a pattern. It constitutes part of the larger chiastic structure of the whole passage (vv. 22-33), but itself mirrors linguistically the larger miracle in which it is embedded.

A. Καὶ εὐθέως ἠνάγκασεν τοὺς μαθητὰς ἐμβῆναι εἰς τὸ πλοῖον καὶ προάγειν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πέραν, ἕως οὗ ἀπολύσῃ τοὺς ὄχλους.

B. καὶ ἀπολύσας τοὺς ὄχλους ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος κατ' ἰδίαν προσεύξασθαι. ὁψίας δὲ γενομένης μόνος ἦν ἐκεῖ.

C. τὸ δὲ πλοῖον ἤδη σταδίους πολλοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς ἀπεῖχεν βασανιζόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων, ἦν γὰρ ἐναντίος ὁ ἄνεμος.

D. τετάρτῃ δὲ φυλακῇ τῆς νυκτὸς ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς περιπατῶν ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν (1.).

E. οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ ιδόντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης περιπατοῦντα ἐταράχθησαν (2.) λέγοντες ὅτι φάντασμα ἐστίν, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ φόβου ἔκραξαν (3.).

F. εὐθὺς δὲ ἐλάλησεν [ὁ Ἰησοῦς] αὐτοῖς λέγων (4.)· θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι (5.)· μὴ φοβεῖσθε.

F. ἁποκριθεὶς δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν· κύριε, εἰ σὺ εἶ, (5.)
E. ἔλευσόν με ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σε ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα.

D. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ἐλθέ. Καὶ καταβὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ πλοίου [ὁ] Πέτρος περιεπάτησεν ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα καὶ ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν (1.)

C. ἔβλεπον δὲ τὸν ἄνεμον ἰσχυρὸν] ἐφοβήθη (2., 3.),
καὶ ἄρξάμενος καταποντίζεσθαι ἔκραξεν λέγων (3.)· κύριε, σῶσόν με.

Εὐθέως δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἐπελάβετο αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ (4.)· ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς τί ἐδίστασας;

B. καὶ ἀναβάντων αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος.

A. οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.

As the chiasmic structure above indicates, the passage centers on Jesus' word of reassurance to the disciples in v. 27 along with Peter's response in v. 28, and it climaxes with the disciples' worship and confession of Jesus in v. 33. Our main focus will be on the frame of the passage (vv. 22 and 33) and the way in which the central point, vv. 27-8, illuminates, and is illuminated by, the rest of the passage.

Commentators have noticed that A (v. 22), like its Markan source (6:45), is troublingly cryptic with regard to Jesus' forceful dismissal of the disciples (εὐθέως ἠνάγκασεν).³⁵ Why does Jesus “immediately compel” them to leave? This lacuna compels the reader to search for an explanation. While the explanation is equally cryptic in its Markan counterpart (6:52), Matthew's thoroughgoing modification of Mark's ending provides a clue for our reading of 14:22. When read with its concentric counterpart – A' (v. 33) – an answer suggests itself, which can be seen in the verbal and thematic correspondence between the verses:

14:22: Καὶ εὐθέως ἠνάγκασεν τοὺς μαθητὰς ἐμβῆναι εἰς τὸ πλοῖον καὶ προάγειν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πέραν, ἕως οὗ ἀπολύσῃ τοὺς ὄχλους.

14:33: οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.

Scholars have often commented on the potentially confusing and seemingly superfluous phrase “those in the boat” (v. 33), since it could (1) suggest Peter was not part of those who worshiped Jesus, the reason for which would be unclear,³⁶ (2) an implied “they” or “the disciples” would have sufficed,³⁷ since no one else is present in the middle of the lake, and (3) Jesus would be included with “those in the boat” (cf. v.32). Grundmann, commenting on the oddity, says, “Daß Matthäus an die Gemeinde denkt, die

³⁵ Cf., e.g., Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 296; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 422.

³⁶ The “confusion” is well-represented in the opposing interpretations found in standard commentaries. Some think Peter was not part of “those in the boat” (e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:510; Gundry, *Matthew*, 301). Others think he was a part of them (e.g., Joachim Gnilka [*Das Matthäusevangelium* (2 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 2:15]: “In das Bekenntnis der Jünger im Boot ist Petrus natürlich [!] miteinzuschließen”]; also France, *Matthew*, 571, n.19). Though not decisive for our argument here, the text seems to read more naturally as including Peter, since in the previous verse Jesus and Peter climb into the boat together (v. 32).

³⁷ Cf. the cognate scene at 8:27: οἱ δὲ ἄνθρωποι ἐθαύμασαν λέγοντες· ποταπὸς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ ἡ θάλασσα αὐτῷ ὑπακούουσιν;

in den Jüngern repräsentiert ist, wird daran deutlich, daß er sagt: οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ.”³⁸

That is, “those in the boat” is the climax of an allegorical interpretation (with a long pedigree) that reads the “boat” as representing the church. While the allegorical interpretation may or may not obtain, a more literarily demonstrable interpretation reads 14:33 as the counterpart to 14:22. Matthew is showing *why* Jesus “compelled” them to get “into the boat” (v.22/v.33) in the first place, viz., to provide a revelation of his identity that was not meant for the “crowds,” whom he “sends away.”³⁹

The events leading up to the sea-walking episode suggest we should read the story’s frame in just this way. In general, the crowds play an ambiguous role in Matthew,⁴⁰ and while they are the recipients of Jesus’ “compassion” (14:14), he nonetheless explicitly excludes them (in close narrative proximity to the sea-walking episode) from knowing “the mysteries of the kingdom” (13:11, 34). To the disciples, however, “the mysteries” are revealed (13:11; cf. 11:25-7; 16:17). Along those same lines, the antithesis between the “crowds” and disciples in 14:22/33 fits well within the decisive and oft-noted shift in the focus of Jesus’ mission between chapters 11-13 and 14-17/8. As a result of his large-scale rejection by “this generation” (11-12), he begins teaching in enigmas (13), and in 14-18 his focus turns to laying the foundation for the future “church.”⁴¹ Thus,

³⁸ Walter Grundmann, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (THNT; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968), 369. An opinion shared by others, e.g., Luz, *Matthew*, 2:322; Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 158.

³⁹ Cf. Heil, *Jesus Walking on the Sea*, 32 (n. 10), 99.

⁴⁰ Cf. David R. Bauer, “The Major Characters of Matthew’s Story,” in *Gospel Interpretation: Narrative-Critical and Social-Scientific Approaches* (ed. Jack Dean Kingsbury; Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1997), 34-5; J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 3-4, 24-25; *idem*, “The Figure of Jesus in Matthew’s Story,” 20.

⁴¹ Cf., e.g., Dale Allison, “Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*,” in *Studies in Matthew*, 139-140; John P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church and Morality in the First Gospel* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 47-8; Donald Verseput, “The Role and Meaning,” 535 (*idem*, *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King: A Study of the Composition of Matthew 11-12* [Frankfurt am Main: Peter

concomitant with and closely related to correcting the misguided answer about Jesus' sonship in 13:55, the sea-walking episode serves as a narrative counterpart to Jesus' statement in 13:11, which itself continues thematically his pronouncement from 11:25-7; the Son is revealed only to *νηπίοι*, that is, disciples.⁴² Further, this interpretation coheres well with the pattern we noted above, viz., Matthew often narrates revelatory events to re-affirm Jesus' identity and vocation despite evidence to the contrary. The revelation of the Son's identity to the disciples at this point in the narrative counters the largely negative response to him in chapters 11-13, much as the Father's declaration at the transfiguration to a select group counters Peter's rejection of his suffering vocation (16:22/17:5).

Keeping this framework in mind is significant for at least three reasons. First, the surprisingly common judgment that "the main scope of the passage is not christological," is untenable.⁴³ Not only does this view create a false choice foreign to Matthew's Gospel,

Lang, 1986], 295-305); cf. also Th. De Kruijf, *Der Sohn des Lebendigen Gottes: Ein Beitrag zur Christologie des Matthäusevangeliums* (AnBib 16; Romae: E Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1962), 76-7; Jack D. Kingsbury, *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13: A Study in Redaction-Criticism* (St. Louis: Clayton, 1977), 130.

⁴² On the literary relationship between 11:25-7 and 13:10-17, cf. Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom, Easy Yoke*, 29. Also, the "infant" and "little ones" metaphors in Matthew transparently serve as ciphers for disciples (cf. Luz, "The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew," in *The Interpretation of Matthew* [ed. Graham Stanton; 2d ed.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995], 128 and n. 21; cf. also Hubert Frankemölle, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi: Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangeliums nach Matthäus* [Münster: Aschendorff, 1973], 185; Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom, Easy Yoke*, 32). As noted above, the revelation of Jesus as the "Son" to the disciples in 14:33 contrasts with the crowds' limited perception of Jesus as "prophet" (16:14; 21:11). This further suggests the structural and theological antithesis between the "crowds" in 14:22 and "those in the boat" in 14:33.

⁴³ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:320, n. 46; France, *Matthew*, 570; Held: "This narrative of Jesus walking on the sea also concerns an event which has solely to do with discipleship" ("The Retelling of Miracle Stories," in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* [trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963], 204); Gnllka: "Das zentrale anwendbare Thema der Perikope ist der Glaube" (*Matthäusevangelium*, 2: 16); Bornkamm, "The Stilling of the Storm in Matthew," in *Tradition and Interpretation*, 55 (though Bornkamm is discussing the storm-stilling in Matt 8:23-7, he links it with the discipleship theme in 14:22-33).

where discipleship and christology are always intricately linked,⁴⁴ but it also fails to recognize that the discipleship theme in 14:22-33 is embedded in and dependent on the revelation of Jesus' identity.

Second, the frame pointed out above suggests that everything in 14:22-33 is expegetical of the disciples' προσκύνησις and confession of Jesus as "Son of God" in 14:33, the climax of the episode.⁴⁵ The entire episode, that is, builds up to and illuminates the disciples' confession. If we want to know what Matthew means, at least to a large degree, by "Son of God," it is here that we will find an answer.⁴⁶

Third, other than at the temptation, this is the only place in the narrative where Jesus' filial identity is so fully explicated. Whereas we are often told *that* Jesus is God's Son (e.g., 2:15; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 17:5, etc.), and from those episodes we garner a few clues, only at the temptation and sea-walking episodes does Matthew provide what amounts to a mini-narrative elucidating his use of "s/Son of God."

That these two episodes serve as literary-christological turning points in the narrative should not be missed. The temptation sets the trajectory for Jesus' obedient sonship – as the son, Jesus *is* Israel, the *faithful* son, "Israel reduced to one."⁴⁷ Likewise, the sea-walking episode is the first time the disciples understand who Jesus really is, evidenced by the fact that here they first confess him "Son of God," and only here and at 28:17 do they render him προσκύνησις. In 14:22-33, the disciples recognize him as the filial

⁴⁴ Cf. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew*, 43, esp. 96-100; Graham Stanton, "Christology and the Parting of the Ways," in *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 190-91.

⁴⁵ Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:317.

⁴⁶ Of course, it is the entire narrative that tells us who Jesus is as God's Son, but in 14:22-33 Matthew brings Jesus' divine-filial identity into particularly sharp focus.

⁴⁷ As noted earlier, there is broad agreement about this interpretation of the temptation episode (cf., e.g., Dale C. Allison, "The Son of God as Israel: A Note on Matthean Christology," *IBS* 9 [1987]: 74-81).

κύριος, the “I am he” who stands over against the chaotic powers of creation, the eschatological presence of Israel’s God. Indeed, the two episodes epitomize the two-level shape of Matthew’s christology that runs throughout the Gospel;⁴⁸ they express *in nuce* who the Son of God is in Matthew’s narrative.⁴⁹ Our interpretation of “Son of God” in 14:33, however, remains to be expounded below.

Having looked in detail at vv. 22 and 33, which provide the literary and theological framework for the passage, we can move more quickly through each step of the story. B (v. 23) and B’ (v. 32) correspond to one another linguistically in multiple ways. Jesus’ “ascent” up the mountain “alone” to pray⁵⁰ – ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος κατ’ ἰδίαν προσεύξασθαι – corresponds to his “ascent” into the boat with Peter to rejoin all the disciples – ἀναβάντων αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, the latter of which seals their rescue from the storm.⁵¹ Only in Jesus’ active presence does the threatening storm subside (cf. 8:26; 18:20), which serves as (part of) the logic for the worship and confession of v. 33.

⁴⁸ Luz calls them the “horizontal” and “vertical” dimensions of Matthew’s christology (Ulrich Luz, “Eine thetische Skizze der matthäischen Christologie,” in *Anfänge der Christologie: Festschrift für Ferdinand Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991], 234).

⁴⁹ Though not directly discussing the passages we are considering here, Luz’s comments are apposite: “Die Verbindung von horizontalen und vertikalen Aspekten in der mt Christologie, insbesondere in seinem Verständnis der Gottessohnschaft Jesu und in der Verbindung von Gottessohn- und Menschensohnaussagen, enthält bemerkenswerte Entsprechungen zur späteren kirchlichen Zweinaturenlehre” (Ibid, 235).

⁵⁰ Matthew gives no hint as to the content of Jesus’ prayer, but his emphasis on Jesus being *alone* on the *mountain* (ἀνέβη εἰς τὸ ὄρος κατ’ ἰδίαν προσεύξασθαι. ὁπίας δὲ γενομένης μόνος ἦν ἐκεῖ, v. 23) probably evokes Jesus’ unique filial relation to the Father, both because of the revelation of Jesus’ filial identity subsequently on the *mount* of transfiguration (17:1-9), and also because his divine-filial identity is the focus of the two other times Matthew shows Jesus praying, at least one of which is in solitude (26:39-44), and possibly the other as well (11:25-7); cf. also 26:53 where Jesus speaks of asking “my Father” for a legion of angels. See Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:12; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:318.

⁵¹ The link between the two verses is further confirmed by the rather strange use of ἀναβαίνω in 14:32 for getting into the boat, for which the normal word would be ἐμβαίνω, evidenced by the fact that (1) Matthew uses ἐμβαίνω in every other such instance (8:23; 9:1; 12:2; 14:22; 15:39), (2) nowhere else uses it for getting into a boat (cf. also Bauer and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 321), and (3) by the numerous MSS which have a form of ἐμβαίνω in 14:33.

The powerful ἄνεμος that batters the boat in C (v. 24) – βασανιζόμενον ὑπὸ τῶν κυμάτων, ἦν γὰρ ἐναντίος ὁ ἄνεμος – corresponds to the ἄνεμος that instills fear in Peter, causing him to sink – βλέπων δὲ τὸν ἄνεμον [ἰσχυρὸν] ἐφοβήθη, καὶ ἀρξάμενος καταποντίζεσθαι (C', v. 30). The terms Matthew uses to describe the power of the ἄνεμος are highly significant; βασανιζόμενον recalls Jesus' conflict with sickness and evil (4:24; 8:6, 29);⁵² καταποντίζεσθαι serves as part of a larger allusion to Ps 69:2-3, 14-16, where the Psalmist is powerless to overcome the “deep mire.”⁵³ Matthew's insertion of the parallel story of Peter's sea-walking creates further correspondences with other parts of the passage, such as his “fear” and “crying out” (v.30, ἐφοβήθη, ἔκραξεν), and the disciples' “fear” and “crying out” (v. 26, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ φόβου ἔκραξαν). Through all of these details the narrative dramatizes the utter helplessness of the disciples and the absolute power of the one who delivers them.⁵⁴ Like YHWH in the OT, Jesus defeats the watery chaos, stretches out his hand,⁵⁵ and rescues his people in the “morning watch.”

D. and E. likewise reflect D.' and E.' in their common linguistic and thematic parallels. The one whom the disciples fear as a ghost because he walks on the water (D., E.) is the one who, conversely, inspires Peter's confident request to participate in his water-conquering power (D.', E.'). Again, the close relationship between christology, revelation, and discipleship in Matthew's Gospel appears (cf. also, e.g., 9:8; 10:7-8; 16:19; 18:18). Only when he is revealed and called upon as κύριος do his followers

⁵² Cf., e.g., 2 Macc 7:13; 9:6; 4 Macc 6:10-11; 8:2.

⁵³ There are numerous echoes in 14:30 of Ps 69:2-3, 14-16 (LXX: Ps 68), and there is broad agreement that this OT text stands behind 14.30. cf. Held, *Jesus Walking*, 61-2; also, e.g., Andrew Angel, “*Crucifixus Vincens*: The ‘Son of God’ as Divine Warrior in Matthew,” *CBQ* 73 (2011): 309; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:508; Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 369; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:320; Nolland, *Matthew*, 602.

⁵⁴ Cf. Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1956), 240.

⁵⁵ On which see chpt. 3, p. 132 above. Along with the allusions to Ps 69:2-3, see also the close connections with Pss 17:17; 143:7 (LXX).

participate in his power, a participation which comes to pass in his sovereign command: ἐλθέ (14:29/cf. Job 38:16).⁵⁶

We arrive, therefore, at the center of the story, the important christological points of which we will have to draw out in several steps. Despite the fact that many commentators hear in Jesus' declaration – θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε (v.27) – an utterance of the divine revelation formula reminiscent of YHWH's repeated pronouncements in Isaiah 40-55, there are two common missteps that blunt the christological force of the passage; they either import concepts foreign to the text or overlook the way Matthew has shaped the account. We will first lay out these two (mis)interpretations, and then address them.

First, there are those who acknowledge the divine revelation formula in Jesus' words, but nonetheless subordinate the passage's *christological* focus to a *theological* one. Davies and Allison say, "[B]y walking on and subduing the sea Jesus has manifested the numinous power of Yahweh. . . In the idiom of 11:27, the Son has made known the Father."⁵⁷ Similarly, Hagner says that in Jesus' utterance we see that "God is present uniquely in Jesus."⁵⁸ Jesus is not so much claiming the divine name for himself, but rather the agent of "the Father's/God's" power.

Second are those who acknowledge the possibility of the divine revelation formula in Jesus' words, but judge it unlikely. Nolland says, "While an echo of the divine self-naming of the OT is possible, in the context the emphatic ἐγὼ in ἐγὼ εἰμι is

⁵⁶ Cf. Heil, *Jesus Walking*, 60-61. As Heil rightly notes, only by the enabling command of YHWH could a human contemplate walking on the sea in a manner reserved for YHWH alone. Here, of course, it is not YHWH commanding Jesus, but Jesus commanding Peter.

⁵⁷ *Matthew*, 2:506.

⁵⁸ *Matthew 14-28*, 423. It is not clear to me exactly what it means for God to be "present uniquely in Jesus."

sufficiently accounted for by the need for Jesus to identify himself as himself.”⁵⁹ France, though previously having considered the divine-revelation formula probable, now sees it as unlikely, with a similar logic to that of Nolland.⁶⁰

The two interpretations above are, in fact, mirror images of one another, both articulating part of the truth but missing how the passage itself holds the two together. The former rightly takes into account the way Matthew has carefully structured the passage and so constantly echoed the Old Testament that one is hard-pressed *not* to hear the divine revelation formula in Jesus’ words.⁶¹ Yet, this interpretation deflects the full implications of Jesus’ appropriation of the divine name for himself as a personal identifier. On the other hand, the latter interpretation rightly recognizes that, if Jesus were going to identify himself, ἐγώ εἰμι would be the natural way to do so, and the phrase *as such* does not necessarily evoke the divine revelation formula.⁶² However, proponents of this latter view often significantly weaken their own argument; they acknowledge the constant presence of OT theophany motifs elsewhere in the passage – even in part of Jesus’ statement in v. 27⁶³ – but nonetheless inexplicably assert that the phrase ἐγώ εἰμι does not contribute to the theophanic nature of the event.⁶⁴ It would indeed be odd for

⁵⁹ *Matthew*, 601.

⁶⁰ *Matthew*, 569-70, n.14.

⁶¹ From my survey of recent Markan and Matthean commentaries, many scholars consider the allusion to the divine revelation formula probable (in Mark 6:50/Matt 14:27).

⁶² So, for example, France’s statement: “[T]o trace the divine name in every NT use of this common phrase would produce absurd results” (*Matthew*, 570, n.14). That, of course, is true. The question, however, is how it is working *in this passage*.

⁶³ For example, Nolland acknowledges that Matthew has written the passage to show Jesus’ action as “distinctly that of God.” And, in Jesus’ command – μὴ φοβεῖσθε – Nolland detects “the pattern of divine visitation” (*Matthew*, 600, 601). Likewise, France notes the many theophanic elements in the story (*Matthew*, 566-7, and n.9).

⁶⁴ Nolland, *op. cit.*

Matthew to draw so thoroughly on OT theophanic motifs, but for the central moment to portray Jesus speaking in a rather mundane way.⁶⁵

We will gain greater clarity on these issues by returning to the literary structure of the passage, attending to the OT allusions woven throughout, and hearing the passage in its larger narrative context. First, we must notice how closely together Matthew has inserted a slew of personal identifiers for Jesus in this short passage. Within seven verses (27-33), Matthew explicitly identifies Jesus seven times:

- v. 27: ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν (1),⁶⁶ ἐγώ εἰμι (2)
- v. 28: κύριε (3)
- v. 29: πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν (4)
- v. 30: κύριε, σῶσόν με (5)
- v. 31: ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα (6)
- v. 33: ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ. (7)

The significance of Matthew's pattern and repeated use of personal identifiers for Jesus in vv. 27-33 can be laid out in several points: (1) the sheer number of identifiers in this short section deserves attention, since such repetition almost axiomatically suggests emphasis;⁶⁷ (2) the repetition in vv. 27-30 stands in conspicuous contrast to the first five verses of the same passage (22-26), where Jesus is never explicitly named, even though

⁶⁵ For another instance where "I am (he)" probably serves the dual role of the self-revelation of Israel's God and as a self-reference (i.e., "It is I"), see *Apoc. Ab.* 8:4; 9:3. Note the similarity between Matt 14:27 and *Apoc. Ab.* 9:3: "Behold. It is I/I am he. Do not fear." One would presume the original reading (probably in Hebrew) was most likely *ʾānî hûʾ* (the only extant texts are in Slavonic); cf. also Andrei A. Orlov, "Praxis of the Voice: The Divine Name Traditions in the Apocalypse of Abraham," *JBL* 127 (2008): 57-8, 61.

⁶⁶ There are text critical issues with this first occurrence of ὁ Ἰησοῦς, and NA²⁸ includes it in brackets. On the likely accidental omission of ὁ Ἰησοῦς through parablepsis (homoeoteleuton: OIC with AYTIOC = AYTIOIC), cf. J. R. Royse, "The Treatment of Scribal Leaps in Metzger's Textual Commentary," *NTS* 29 (1983): 547.

⁶⁷ On repetition, see Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel*, 13. As noted previously, Matthew uses repetition both on a macro and micro scale throughout the narrative to emphasize certain themes.

he is the subject or object of nine verbs or participles;⁶⁸ (3) the various identifiers enter the story only during and after the self-revelatory moment of v.27, underscoring the accounts' focus on the revelation of Jesus' identity; (4) in the previous feeding of the 5,000 (14:14-21), Jesus is mentioned by name only once in that entire episode, and that instance is textually uncertain (though probably original); (5) the alternating pattern – Ἰησοῦς - ἐγώ εἰμι – κύριε - Ἰησοῦν – κύριε - Ἰησοῦν – θεοῦ υἱός – brings together in this compact space some of the most important identifiers for Jesus in the narrative (see chpt. 5 below). When these points are placed alongside the central and unique role Jesus' "name" plays in Matthew's Gospel,⁶⁹ the concentration of identifiers for Jesus in 14:27-33 suggests that this episode is not simply recapitulatory and/or further revelatory of Jesus' identity; rather, it is the moment at which his identity is most manifest. Here he is "most himself."⁷⁰

Second – returning to the literary structure of the passage – we should note how the flow of the passage draws all of these identifiers together as a way of explicating Jesus' identity. Where Mark does not include Jesus' name just before his revelatory statement (6:50), Matthew inserts it.⁷¹ This insertion serves literarily to couple the name "Jesus" with the following ἐγώ εἰμι, such that Jesus is not uttering the divine revelation

⁶⁸ When he is identified in vv. 22-26, Matthew only uses the personal pronoun αὐτός (2x, v.22, v.26). His more common pattern is to alternate between a personal identifier and a personal pronoun, as he does several times for the disciples in this passage (cf. vv. 22, 25, 26).

⁶⁹ On the particular significance of Jesus' name for Matthew's Gospel, cf. Fred W. Burnett, "The Undecidability of the Proper Name 'Jesus' in Matthew," *Semeia* 54 (1991): 124, 128; Adelheid Ruck-Schröder, *Der Name Gottes und der Name Jesu. Eine neutestamentliche Studie* (WMANT 80; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1999), 261-2. Kupp calls Jesus' naming in 1.21-3 "the christological pivot of the Gospel" and "[Matthew's] ideological cipher for the narrative" (David Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God's People in the First Gospel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 58).

⁷⁰ Cf. Hans Frei, *The Identity of Jesus Christ: The Hermeneutical Basis of Dogmatic Theology* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1997), 17-18.

⁷¹ As noted above, though textually uncertain, a number of factors suggest ὁ Ἰησοῦς is original. See n. 66 above.

formula simply as the invocation of the “Father’s” power, but as a reference to himself.⁷² Peter’s following response confirms this, where his reply – εἰ σὺ εἶ (v. 28) – serves as the counterpart to Jesus’ declaration, ἐγὼ εἰμι (v. 27).⁷³

Importantly, however, Peter does not simply respond with the conditional “if/since it is you,” but begins his address with “Lord” (κύριε). Considering that Matthew has added Peter’s response to Mark’s account in this theophanic context, calling Jesus κύριε here takes on a nuance only hinted at in other portions of the Gospel. While scholars have often noted that Jesus’ self declaration (ἐγὼ εἰμι) likely evokes YHWH’s self-revelatory announcement in the LXX of Isaiah (e.g., 41:4, 43:10, etc.), they have less often noticed how Peter’s immediately subsequent response to Jesus as “Lord” (κύριε) – as well as his second address to him as “Lord” for rescue (v.30) – confirms and deepens the evocation not only of Isaiah,⁷⁴ but also of numerous other OT passages. Particularly relevant is YHWH’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Consider, for example:

Exod 7:5: καὶ γνώσονται πάντες οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ἐκτείνων τὴν χεῖρα ἐπ’ Αἴγυπτον καὶ ἐξάξω τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν

Exod 8:18: ἵνα εἰδῇς ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ὁ κύριος πάσης τῆς γῆς

Exod 14:4: καὶ γνώσονται πάντες οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος καὶ ἐποίησαν οὕτως (cf. also 14.18)

Exod 14:10: καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα ἀνεβόησαν δὲ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ πρὸς κύριον

⁷² For example, unlike the angel Yahoel in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, who is the “mediator of the ineffable name” (10:3), Jesus here claims the divine name for himself. See the discussion of the *Apoc. Ab.* in n. 106 below.

⁷³ Cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:13; Heil, *Jesus Walking*, 60; Nolland, *Matthew*, 601.

⁷⁴ Isa. 45:19: ἐγὼ εἰμι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος λαλῶν δικαιοσύνην καὶ ἀναγγέλλων ἀλήθειαν. In the MT of Isaiah, YHWH declares several times that “I am the Lord” (e.g., Isa 45:5: אני יהוה ואין עוד). The LXX slightly modifies it: ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεός καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι πλὴν ἐμοῦ θεός (cf., e.g., a similar pattern in the MT and LXX of Isa. 42:6, 8; 43:11, 15; 45:6; 45:18, though in the latter text the LXX omits both κύριος and θεός).

Exod 14:21: ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωυσῆς τὴν χειρὰ ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ
ὑπήγαγεν κύριος τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ

Exod 14:30: καὶ ἐρρύσατο κύριος (יהוה נשׁוּי) τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ
ἐκείνῃ

Exod 14:31: εἶδεν δὲ Ἰσραὴλ τὴν χειρὰ τὴν μεγάλην ἃ ἐποίησεν κύριος
τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ἐφοβήθη δὲ ὁ λαὸς τὸν κύριον καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ
Μωυσῇ τῷ θεράποντι αὐτοῦ⁷⁵

The motif of YHWH's declaration of himself as Lord in this precise (or very similar) way – ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος – continues throughout the OT, often in the context of YHWH's deliverance and intention to make his unique lordship known (Exod 20:2; 29:46; Lev 11:45; 19:36; Isa 45:8, 19; Jer 24:7; Ezek 28:22; repeatedly through Ezek). Particularly noteworthy are the instances listed above from Exodus, where YHWH, for the purpose of revealing his sovereign lordship to Egypt and Israel:

(1) declares himself the Lord (ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος, 7:5)

(2) stretches out his hand (ἐκτείνων τὴν χειρὰ) to deliver Israel (7:5; 14:31)⁷⁶ from the sea (θάλασσα, 14:16, 21, etc.) in the “morning watch” (ἐν τῇ φυλακῇ τῇ ἑωθινῇ, 14:24)

(3) is “Lord of all the earth” (ὁ κύριος πάσης τῆς γῆς)

(4) to whom Israel cries out (ἀνεβόησαν) as “Lord” in their fear (ἐφοβήθησαν) at the sea (14:10)

(5) who is “feared” (ἐφοβήθη)⁷⁷ when he definitively demonstrates the “saving” (ἐρρύσατο, נשׁוּי) power of “his mighty hand” (τὴν χειρὰ τὴν

⁷⁵ The LXX and MT are quite close in 14:31, even though many English translations do not render יִרְאֵה הגדלה as, “And Israel saw the mighty hand.”

⁷⁶ The repetition of the “hand” motif in 7:5 and 14:31 provides an inclusio for the entire episode of God's judgment against Egypt. Exod 7.5 is YHWH's initial declaration, before any of the plagues, that he will “stretch out his hand” to deliver Israel, and 14:31 is the final and definitive consummation of that declaration. Indeed, chapter 14 as a whole serves at the “fulfillment” of YHWH's claim in 7:5, since it is at the sea that Egypt finally sees the truth of his statement, ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος (14:4).

⁷⁷ As is well known, in such a context, “fear” (φοβέω) carries the connotation of “worship” (cf., e.g., Deut 4:10; 5:29; 6:2, etc.).

μεγάλην, 14:30-31), defeating Egypt at the sea by controlling the waters (ὕδωρ, 14:21, 22, 26, etc.) with a “strong south wind” (ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ, 14:21).

It is, Exodus 15 goes on to stress, the powerful “right hand” of the κύριος that proves he is indeed Lord of all (15:6, 12; cf. 15:16, 17).

Matt 14:27-33, so preoccupied with the revelation of Jesus’ identity and saving power, narrates his triumph over the seas and his deliverance of Peter from the primeval forces of creation with very similar language and in a strikingly similar pattern:

(1) during the “fourth watch” (τετάρτη δὲ φυλακῇ τῆς νυκτός, v.25)⁷⁸ Jesus strides across the punishing waves;

(2) utters the divine name (ἐγὼ εἰμι, v.27) in his initial triumph over the sea (ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης περιπατοῦντα, vv. 25, 26);

(3) Peter responds to his declaration, addressing him as Lord (κύριε, εἰ σὺ εἶ, v.28) and steps out onto the waters at his command (τὰ ὕδατα, vv. 28, 29);⁷⁹

(4) Peter, fearing (ἐφοβήθη, v.30) the strong wind (ἄνεμον ἰσχυρόν, v. 30)⁸⁰ and beginning to sink into the sea (ἀρξάμενος καταποντίζεσθαι, v.

⁷⁸ Exod 14:24 is the only place in the OT where the “morning watch” is mentioned, which may strengthen the connection with the specific mention of the “fourth watch” (i.e. the morning watch) in Matt 14:25 (cf. also Jdt 12:5 for another mention of the “morning watch”).

⁷⁹ The connection I am arguing for with Exodus 14 may go some way in explaining Matthew’s seemingly odd shift from θάλασσα to ὕδωρ when speaking of Jesus’ and Peter’s walking, respectively. Many commentators puzzle over this shift, and on the whole they resort to Held’s explanation that, “The fact that Matthew refers to Jesus as walking ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν . . . while he writes that Peter walked ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα . . . can perhaps be explained by the fact that Jesus walks across a long distance on the *sea*, as such, whereas Peter asks to walk only on the *water* separating him from Jesus, and not on the sea as such (*Jesus Walking*, 13, n.9; italics original). Held’s “perhaps” suggests he is unsure, and I find his explanation somewhat unconvincing. The focus of the miracle is not so much on the distance as on the miraculous act itself, evidenced in the use of the same preposition for them both (ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν, ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα). Rather, I would suggest that Matthew is reflecting the idiom of one of his intertexts (Exod 14) that repeatedly shifts between θάλασσα and ὕδωρ (Exod 14:21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29; 15:8, 10, 19). Further, the distinction is *perhaps* (!) a christological one – the filial κύριος tames that which traditionally represented chaotic/demonic forces (not water as such, but the “sea”), such that his disciple walks upon the now-controlled sea, more meekly described as “the water” (although the storm is still raging [v.30], the presence of the κύριος assures that it is no longer any real threat [v.31]).

⁸⁰ Though ἰσχυρόν is textually uncertain, several factors suggest its originality – (1) its relatively wide textual support (e.g., B¹, C, D, W) as opposed to its omission in exclusively Alexandrian text types (Σ, B*, 33); (2) Matthew’s use of ἰσχυρός elsewhere in *dissimilar* contexts (3:11, 12:29), making it unlikely that

30), cries out (ἔκραξεν, v. 30) out to Jesus as “Lord” to save him (κύριε, σῶσόν με, v. 30);⁸¹

(5) Jesus stretches out his hand (ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα, v.31),⁸² saves Peter and controls the wind (ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος, v.32), with the result that

(6) the disciples worship him (οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ, v.33).

Indeed, the swathe of intertexts in 14:22-33 – especially 14:27-33 – is so thick that one gets the impression that Matthew has narrated this scene almost entirely from the language of Exodus, Isaiah, and the Psalms, all interpenetrating one another, the chorus of which amplifies what Matthew is saying about Jesus. The κύριος, envisioned in Exodus, Isaiah, and the Psalms as the one who fights for and “saves” Israel, is, Matthew narrates, present as “Jesus,” the one who “saves his people” (1:21). In 14:27-33, he demonstrates that “saving” power (14:30) by “stretching forth his hand” (v. 31) as Lord over wind and wave. Jesus not only “shares in the sovereign lordship of Yahweh,”⁸³ but also *is*, somehow, the human embodiment of YHWH.

That “somehow” finds its answer in the disciples’ προσκύνησις and confession in 14:33. Literarily, the confession parallels Jesus’ and Peter’s earlier words: ἐγώ εἰμι – κύριε, εἰ σὺ εἶ – θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ. The repetition of these pronouncements about who Jesus *is*, placed at the center (vv. 27-8) and climax of the passage (v. 33) and peppered with multiple uses of “Jesus,” creates an equative and mutually interpretive relationship

14:30 is an assimilation to another text; (3) Matthew’s frequent use of adjectival intensifiers (2:10, 18; 17:6, 23; 18:31; 19:25; 26:22; 27:19); (4) its similar ending to the previous word ἄνεμον (thus, its omission as homoeoteleuton); (5) the “strong wind” may be a reflection of Matthew’s use of Exod 14:21.

⁸¹ Along with the echo of the Psalms noted above, cf. also Isa 49:26: καὶ αἰσθανθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ ὅτι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ ῥυσάμενός [מְשִׁיעַ] σε; Isa 60:16: καὶ γνώσῃ ὅτι ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ σφύζων [מְשִׁיעַ] σε καὶ ἐξαπρούμενός σε θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ; cf. also Isa. 43:3, 11; 45:21.

⁸² Note also the connection in the MT of Isa 43:13 between YHWH’s self-declaration (“I am he”) and the inimitable power of his “hand”: גם־מִיּוֹם אֲנִי הָאֵל וְאֵין מִיּוֹם מִצִּיל אֶפְעַל וְמִי יִשְׁכַּנָּה.

⁸³ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:507.

between them all: Jesus is the “I am he,” the saving Lord, the Son of God. As Sand puts it, “Die christologiesche Aussage in [14.]32f (Du bist der Sohn Gottes) interpretiert (nachträglich) das >>Ich bin’s<< in v.27 als göttliche Offenbarungsformel.”⁸⁴ To this we shall return.

Further, just as the passage to this point has reflected OT language for Israel’s κύριος and his acts, so also the disciples’ climactic confession of Jesus’ divine-filial identity bears a strong resemblance to OT confessions of Israel’s God:

Matt 14:33: προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.

3 Kgdms 18:39: καὶ ἔπεσεν πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν καὶ εἶπον ἀληθῶς κύριός ἐστιν ὁ θεός αὐτὸς ὁ θεός.

Dan. 2:47: καὶ ἐκφωνήσας ὁ βασιλεὺς πρὸς τὸν Δανιηλ εἶπεν ἐπ’ ἀληθείας ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν θεὸς τῶν θεῶν καὶ κύριος τῶν βασιλείων.⁸⁵

In each of the passages above, the confession of the unique lordship of Israel’s God occurs in response to his accomplishment of something impossible for anyone but the true κύριος, much like Matt 14:33.⁸⁶ Closely related is the consistent pairing of προσκύνησις with the name of Israel’s κύριος in the Psalms vis-à-vis his control over creation, and particularly over the mighty waters:

⁸⁴ Alexander Sand, “Exkurs 11: Die Christologie des Matthäusevangeliums,” in *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1986), 355 (though what Sand means by “divine” is not exactly clear); cf. also Heil, *Jesus Walking*, 67.

⁸⁵ See also the MT of Jer 3:23.

⁸⁶ The language of 3 Kgdms 18:39 is particularly interesting as an intertext (though I am not aware of anyone pursuing it in detail) not only because of the verse’s verbal and thematic overlap with 14:33, but also because of its larger context that finds a number of points of contact with Matt 14:27-33. Whether or not one can definitively conclude that Matt 14:22-33 is evoking the broader context of 3 Kgdms 18:39, the larger point is that it articulates the way in which Israel responded to a demonstration of YHWH’s unique lordship – it fell down before him in worship and confession.

Ps 28:2-3: ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ προσκυνήσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν αὐλῇ ἁγίᾳ αὐτοῦ (שׁוֹמֵר תְּהִלָּתוֹ). Φωνὴ κυρίου ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης ἐβρόντησεν κύριος ἐπὶ ὑδάτων πολλῶν.

Ps 65:4-6: πᾶσα ἡ γῆ προσκυνήσάτωσάν σοι καὶ ψαλάτωσάν σοι ψαλάτωσαν τῷ ὀνόματί σου διάψαλμα⁵ δεῦτε καὶ ἴδετε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ φοβερὸς ἐν βουλαῖς ὑπὲρ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὁ μεταστρέφων τὴν θάλασσαν εἰς ξηράν ἐν ποταμῷ διελεύσονται ποδί ἐκεῖ εὐφρανθησόμεθα ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

Ps 94:5-6: ὅτι αὐτοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ θάλασσα καὶ αὐτὸς ἐποίησεν αὐτήν καὶ τὴν ξηρὰν αἱ χεῖρες αὐτοῦ ἐπλασαν⁶ δεῦτε προσκυνήσωμεν καὶ προσπέσωμεν αὐτῷ καὶ κλαύσωμεν (נִבְרַח) ἐναντίον κυρίου τοῦ ποιήσαντος ἡμᾶς.⁸⁷

Hearing the link in these Psalms between the “Lord’s” control over creation and Israel’s/creation’s responsive προσκύνησις is not to attempt to locate any one of them in particular as Matthew’s intertext. Rather, they are deeply woven into Matthew’s liturgical-linguistic encyclopedia – Israel’s worship of the κύριος is often tied to his unique control over creation. Matthew has christologically “actualized” this encyclopedic material through the careful literary and intertextual arrangement of 14:22-33 we observed above. The filial κύριος controls the sea; he is worshiped in the manner Israel reserved for the one true κύριος.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Cf. also, e.g., Pss 85:8-10; 95:9-10; 96:3-7; Sir 50:17-22; cf. also Pss 88:5-12; 106:28-33 (though not with προσκυνέω); Exod 14:31; Jon 1:16; Bel 1:4-5. Further, Ps 106 narrates Israel’s προσκύνησις before the golden calf as especially deplorable because they forgot their “Savior’s” (τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ σώζοντος) mighty works at the Red Sea (cf. vv. 6-23).

⁸⁸ To use Wittgenstein’s language, one might say Matthew has followed a “grammatical rule.” In Second Temple Judaism, to speak of the ruler of creation is to invoke a certain “form of life” – a response of worship to the one who so rules (cf. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §§ 19 & 23; on rule-following, cf. G. P. Baker & P. M. S. Hacker, *Wittgenstein: Rules, Grammar, and Necessity: Essays and Exegesis of §§ 185-242*; Volume 2 of *An Analytical Commentary on the Philosophical Investigations* [rev. ed.; Chichester: Wiley and Blackwell, 2009], 46-55).

IV. Early Jewish “Agency” Language and Matt 14:22-33

Before summarizing the christological implications of our discussion of 14:22-37, we now return more explicitly to the interpretation of Jesus as “God’s agent” – that is, the question of whether Jesus is here, in some way, *identified* with Israel’s κύριος, or simply acting as the “channel” of his power, a position supported by a number of scholars.⁸⁹ Nothing thus far in our observations has suggested that Matthew is here stressing Jesus’ agency, but rather that Jesus does what he does out of his identity as the filial κύριος. Further instructive, however, will be to consider how human and angelic “agency” language commonly functioned in ancient Jewish literature. Though this topic could elicit a monograph in itself, a number of examples from various texts will suffice to make the point that Matt 14:22-33 does not fit neatly within standard Jewish language for human or angelic agents, and therefore that background, while not irrelevant, insufficiently accounts for the christological grammar of the passage.

Consider, for example, the most well-known instance where a figure other than YHWH himself is depicted as controlling the sea – Moses at Israel’s departure from Egypt – which bears directly on our passage if our argument above is accurate. The episode in Exodus 14, and its later Jewish retellings, unambiguously articulate Moses’ intermediate agency, while clearly stressing YHWH’s ultimate agency.⁹⁰ The citations below are selections from a number of the relevant texts:

⁸⁹ Cf. pages 166-7 above and n. 5.

⁹⁰ Reflecting a similar pattern to that which Stuckenbruck notes about “praise” offered to God’s agents. In such contexts, God is always the ultimate object of praise/worship (cf. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “‘Angels’ and ‘God’: Exploring the Limits of Early Jewish Monotheism,” in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* [eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Wendy E. S. North; JSNTSup 263; New York: T&T Clark, 2004], 56-7).

Exod 14:13: ὁρᾶτε τὴν σωτηρίαν (וַיִּרְאוּ מִצְרַיִם וְיִשְׂרָאֵל) τὴν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἣν ποιήσει ἡμῖν σήμερον.

Exod 14:21: ἐξέτεινεν δὲ Μωυσῆς τὴν χεῖρα ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ὑπήγαγεν κύριος τὴν θάλασσαν ἐν ἀνέμῳ νότῳ βιαίῳ ὅλην τὴν νύκτα καὶ ἐποίησεν τὴν θάλασσαν ξηρὰν καὶ ἐσχίσθη τὸ ὕδωρ.

Exod 14:25: καὶ εἶπαν οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι φύγωμεν ἀπὸ προσώπου Ἰσραὴλ ὁ γὰρ κύριος πολεμεῖ περὶ αὐτῶν τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους.

Deut 11:4: . . . καὶ ὅσα ἐποίησεν [ὁ κύριος] τὴν δύναμιν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων . . . ὡς ἐπέκλυσεν τὸ ὕδωρ τῆς θαλάσσης τῆς ἐρυθρᾶς ἐπὶ προσώπου αὐτῶν

Josh 2:10: ἀκηκόαμεν γὰρ ὅτι κατεξήρανε κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὴν ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν ἀπὸ προσώπου ὑμῶν . . .

Ps 105:8-9 LXX: καὶ ἔσωσεν [ὁ κύριος] αὐτοὺς ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ τοῦ γνωρίσαι τὴν δυναστείαν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπετίμησεν τῇ ἐρυθρᾷ θαλάσῃ καὶ ἐξηράνη καὶ ὠδήγησεν αὐτοὺς ἐν ἀβύσσῳ ὡς ἐν ἐρήμῳ.

Isa 63:12 LXX: ὁ ἀγαγὼν τῇ δεξιᾷ Μωυσῆν (וַיַּגֵּד מֹשֶׁה בְּיָדוֹ) ὁ βραχίον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ κατίσχυσεν ὕδωρ ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτῷ ὄνομα αἰώνιον.⁹¹

Bar 2:11: καὶ νῦν κύριε ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ ὃς ἐξήγαγες τὸν λαόν σου ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ καὶ ἐν σημείοις καὶ ἐν τέρασιν καὶ ἐν δυνάμει μεγάλη καὶ ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ καὶ ἐποίησας σεαυτῷ ὄνομα ὡς ἡ ἡμέρα αὕτη.

1 Macc 4:9-11, 24: μνήσθητε ὡς ἐσώθησαν οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἐν θαλάσῃ ἐρυθρᾷ ὅτε ἐδίωκεν αὐτοὺς Φαραὼ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ νῦν βοήσωμεν εἰς οὐρανόν . . . καὶ γνώσονται πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ὅτι ἔστιν ὁ λυτρούμενος καὶ σώζων τὸν Ἰσραὴλ . . . καὶ ἐπιστραφέντες [from victory] ὑμνοῦν καὶ εὐλόγουν εἰς οὐρανὸν ὅτι καλὸν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ (cf. 4:30-33).

Jub. 48:13-14: And I [Moses] stood between the Egyptians and Israel, and we delivered Israel out of his hand, and out of the hand of his people, and the Lord brought them through the midst of the sea as if it were dry land. .

⁹¹ Isa 63:9 makes an even stronger point: ἐκ πάσης θλίψεως οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος ἀλλ' αὐτὸς κύριος ἔσωσεν αὐτοὺς διὰ τὸ ἀγαπᾶν αὐτοὺς (the MT reading is unclear, since the *kethib* and *qere* differ at a crucial point).

. . And all the peoples whom he brought to pursue after Israel, the Lord our God cast them into the midst of the sea.⁹²

Artap. 3.27.36-37: But a divine voice came to Moses to strike the sea with his rod and divide it when the Egyptians went in with them and pursued, fire shone out from in front of them and the sea again flooded the path. All the Egyptians were destroyed by both the fire and the flood.⁹³

1 En. 89:22-26: And the Lord of the sheep went with them, leading them, and all his sheep followed him. And his face was dazzling and glorious and fearful to look at. And the wolves began to pursue those sheep And their Lord, as he led them [through the split sea], stood between them and the wolves And when they [the wolves] saw the Lord of the sheep, they turned to flee from his presence.⁹⁴

1QM XI, 5, 9-10: Neither our power nor the strength of our hand have done valiantly, but by Your power and the strength of Your great valor (בכוחה ובעוז חילכה הגדול). . . . You will do to them as You did to Pharaoh (ותעש להמה כפרעה), and the officers of his chariots in the Red Sea.⁹⁵

Ezek. Trag. 1:224-27: κάπειθ' ὁ κείνων ἡγεμὼν Μωσῆς, λαβὼν / ῥάβδον θεοῦ, τῇ δὴ πρὶν Αἰγύπτῳ κακὰ / σημεῖα καὶ τεράατ' ἐξεμήσατο / ἔτυψ' Ἐρυθρὰς νῶτα καὶ ἔσχισεν μέσον.⁹⁶

Philo, *Mos.* 1:177, 180: προσταχθεὶς [by God] δὲ Μωυσῆς τῇ βακτηρίᾳ παῖει τὴν θάλασσαν . . . τοῦτο [the dividing of the sea] ἰδὼν Μωυσῆς καὶ θαυμάσας ἐγεγῆθει καὶ πληρωθεὶς χαρᾶς τὸ μέγα τοῦτο καὶ θαυμαστὸν ἔργον Ἑβραῖοι καταπλαγέντες ἀναιμωτὶ νίκην οὐκ

⁹² Translation by O. S. Wintermute in Charlesworth, *OTP*, 2:140.

⁹³ Translation by J. J. Collins in Charlesworth, *OTP*, 2:902. Especially interesting is Artapanus's attribution of the rescue at the sea explicitly to Israel's God, given his penchant for exalting Moses (3.27.6, 32). Barclay's statement that Artapanus does not "elevate . . . 'the God of the Jews' over the Gods of Egypt" does not do justice to the piecemeal summaries of his that we actually have (J. M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE – 117 CE)* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996], 132). Though Artapanus can, surprisingly, appear to endorse Egyptian cults of various sorts, there is only one who receives the title "Master of the universe," viz., the God of Israel (τὸν τῆς οἰκουμένης δεσπότην; 3.27.22). And, while it may be that Artapanus envisions Moses as contributing to the establishment of certain Egyptian cults (3.27.4), he is only said to "pray" to Israel's God (3.27.21).

⁹⁴ From *1 Enoch: A New Translation* (trans. George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004). In Enoch's vision of Israel's exodus from Egypt, Moses is not mentioned (though he is mentioned before and after the actual exodus).

⁹⁵ All DSS translations from Michael O. Wise, Martin G. Abegg Jr., and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2005).

⁹⁶ The text goes on to say that when the light from heaven appeared like a fire, Israel thought God was going to help the Egyptians who were stuck in the mud of the sea floor, and that the "Most High" had turned his "hand" against them. They were wrong, however, and God "utterly destroyed" the Egyptian army (1.232-242).

ἐλπισθεῖσαν ἤραντο. . . ἐπὶ τῆς ἡϊόνος στήσαντες εὐχαριστικούς ὕμνους
εἰς τὸν θεὸν ἡδον, ἐξάρχοντος Μωυσέως μὲν τοῖς ἀνδράσιν, ἀδελφῆς δὲ
τούτου ταῖς γυναιξίν.⁹⁷

Jos. Ant. 2:332, 333, 239: οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ μικροῖς τὸ θεῖον τὴν ἑαυτοῦ
συμμαχίαν οἷς ἂν εὖνουν ἢ δίδωσιν ἀλλ’ ἐφ’ οἷς ἀνθρωπίνην ἐλπίδα μὴ
βλέποι πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον παροῦσαν γένοιτο γὰρ ἂν καὶ ταῦθ’ ὑμῖν
πεδία τοῦ θεοῦ θελήσαντος καὶ γῆ τὸ πέλαγος Μωυσῆς δὲ ὀρῶν τὴν
ἐπιφάνειαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸ πέλαγος ἐκκεχωρηκὸς αὐτοῖς τῆς ἰδίας
ἡπείρου . . . καὶ χάριν ἔχοντας διὰ τὴν παράλογον οὕτως ἐξ αὐτοῦ
σωτηρίαν ἀναφανείσαν

L.A.B. 10:5: Et dixit Deus: Quoniam exclamasti ad me, tolle virgam tuam
et percute mare, et siccabitur. Et faciente hec omnia Moyse, comminatus
est Deus mari et exsiccatum est mare. Et steterunt maria aquarum . . . ab
stridore timoris Dei et ab inspiratione ire Domini mei [sic] Et precepit
Dominus mari et reversum est in fluxos suos . . .

L.A.B. 15:5: Et precepi [Dominus] mari, et di[s]ruptis ante faciem eorum
abyssis, steterunt muri aquarum.⁹⁸

Conversley, note the mockery made of those who presume to control the sea:

Pss. Sol. 2:27-29: Pompey (?) declares, ἐγὼ κύριος γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης
ἔσομαι. The Psalmist replies, οὐκ ἐπέγνων ὅτι ὁ θεὸς μέγας κραταιὸς ἐν
ισχύι αὐτοῦ τῇ μεγάλῃ (29). Ironically, “the sinner” is destroyed by that
over which he asserted power: τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ διαφερόμενον ἐπὶ κυμάτων
ἐν ὕβρει πολλῇ καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ θάπτων ὅτι ἐξουθένωσεν [ὁ θεὸς] αὐτὸν ἐν
ἀτιμίᾳ (27)

2 Macc 9:8, 12: Antiochus’ arrogance and humiliation: ὁ δ’ ἄρτι δοκῶν
τοῖς τῆς θαλάσσης κύμασιν ἐπιτάσσειν διὰ τὴν ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον ἀλαζονείαν

⁹⁷ This is an important text considering the extravagant things Philo says about Moses in the preceding context (*Mos.* 1:155-58). At the Red Sea, Moses is just as “amazed” as the other Israelites at what God does with the result that he and Miriam lead Israel in praise. It should be noted that when Philo uses extremely exalted and “divine” language for Moses, it is often in the context of his excellence in the virtues (cf. *Mos.* 148-49; cf. also 1:27). Philo’s language for Moses’ “participation” in God’s rule (e.g., 1:155) is, of course, functioning within the logic of so-called Middle Platonism (cf. esp. 1:158). Moses has become “like” God and even shared the name “god,” because he has left worldly desire behind (1:153-4) and, in imitating the incorporeal world of “incorruptible reason” (ἐνίκα τῷ περὶ τὸν λογισμὸν ἀδεκάστῳ, 1:150) has become like it (cf. also Philo, *Prob.* 1:43).

⁹⁸ Cf. also, e.g., Ps 136:11-15; Neh 9:10; Jdt 5:13; *Apoc. Zeph.* 6:10; 4 *Ezra* 1:7, 13; 2:1; 3:17; *Apos. Con.* 7.36.3; 8.12.26 (Books 7 and 8 of the *Apostolic Constitutions* contain what may be remnants of Jewish synagogal prayers; cf. D. A. Fiensy, “Hellenistic Synagogal Prayers,” in *OTP* [trans. D. R. Darnell]); Exorcism Fragment A/B 1:52-5.

καὶ πλάστιγγι τὰ τῶν ὀρέων οἰόμενος ὕψη στήσιν κατὰ γῆν γενόμενος ἐν
φορείῳ παρεκομίζετο φανεράν τοῦ θεοῦ πᾶσιν τὴν δύναμιν ἐνδεικνύμενος
. . . καὶ μηδὲ τῆς ὁσμῆς αὐτοῦ δυνάμενος ἀνέχεσθαι ταῦτ' ἔφη δίκαιον
ὑποτάσσεσθαι τῷ θεῷ καὶ μὴ θνητὸν ὄντα ἰσόθεα φρονεῖν.

In all of the examples above, even if Moses' agency is mentioned, there is an immediate recognition of God's ultimate agency, leaving it unambiguous that he is the one who accomplished the work through Moses; the κύριος is always at the center of Israel's praise. Indeed, Israel's deliverance at the sea is invoked repeatedly in Jewish literature as the event *par excellence* by which the κύριος "makes a name" for *himself* (e.g., Exod 7:5; 14:18; Josh 9:9; 2 Sam 7:23; 1 Chr 17:21; Neh 9:10; Ps 105:8 [LXX]; Isa 63:12; Jer 32:20; Ezek 20:5-10; Dan 9:15; Bar 2:11; 1 Macc 4:11). As we have already seen, in Matt 14:22-33 it is the filial κύριος who makes a name for himself; he is the one who is worshiped.

Further, it is not only in the exodus event, but also in a broad array of different contexts where a human or angelic servant of God accomplishes a mighty deed on behalf of Israel that early Jewish writers consistently and explicitly stress God's ultimate agency. We have already seen such a pattern at work in the "refusal tradition" (see chpt. 1).⁹⁹

Tob 12:16-18: καὶ ἐταράχθησαν οἱ δύο καὶ ἔπεσον ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ὅτι ἐφοβήθησαν. καὶ εἶπεν [Ραφαηλ] αὐτοῖς μὴ φοβεῖσθε εἰρήνην ὑμῖν ἔσται τὸν δὲ θεὸν εὐλογεῖτε εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. ἐγὼ ὅτε ἤμην μεθ' ὑμῶν οὐχὶ τῇ ἐμῇ χάριτι ἤμην μεθ' ὑμῶν ἀλλὰ τῇ θελήσει τοῦ θεοῦ αὐτὸν εὐλογεῖτε κατὰ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας αὐτῷ ὑμνεῖτε.

Jud 14:7, 10: ὥς δὲ ἀνέλαβον αὐτόν [Αχιωρ] προσέπεσεν τοῖς ποσὶν Ιουδιθ καὶ προσεκύνησεν τῷ προσώπῳ αὐτῆς καὶ εἶπεν εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν παντὶ σκηνώματι Ιουδα καὶ ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει οἵτινες ἀκούσαντες τὸ ὄνομα σου ταραχθήσονται . . . ἰδὼν δὲ Αχιωρ πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τοῦ

⁹⁹ I am including below only one of the examples of the refusal tradition (Tob 12). See chpt. 1 above.

Ισραηλ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ σφόδρα καὶ περιετέμετο τὴν σάρκα τῆς ἀκροβυστίας αὐτοῦ καὶ προσετέθη εἰς τὸν οἶκον Ισραηλ ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης

Jud 15:8, 10, 14-16:2: οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν Ιερουσαλημ ἦλθον τοῦ θεάσασθαι τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἃ ἐποίησεν κύριος τῷ Ισραηλ . . . (the high priest Joakim to Judith) ἐποίησας ταῦτα πάντα ἐν χειρί σου ἐποίησας τὰ ἀγαθὰ μετὰ Ισραηλ καὶ εὐδόκησεν ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς ὁ θεός. . . καὶ ἐξῆρχεν Ιουδιθ τὴν ἐξομολόγησιν ταύτην ἐν παντὶ Ισραηλ καὶ ὑπερεφώνει πᾶς ὁ λαὸς τὴν αἴνεσιν ταύτην. καὶ εἶπεν Ιουδιθ ἐξάρχετε τῷ θεῷ μου ἐν τυμπάνοις ᾄσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν κυμβάλοις ἐναρμόσασθε αὐτῷ ψαλμὸν καὶ αἶνον ὑψοῦτε καὶ ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ. ὅτι θεὸς συντρίβων πολέμους κύριος ὅτι εἰς παρεμβολὰς αὐτοῦ ἐν μέσῳ λαοῦ ἐξεΐλατό με ἐκ χειρὸς καταδιωκόντων με.

Sirach 45:1-3: (eulogy to Moses) καὶ ἐξήγαγεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἄνδρα ἐλέους εὐρίσκοντα χάριν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς πάσης σαρκὸς . . . ὥμοίωσεν αὐτὸν δόξῃ ἁγίων καὶ ἐμεγάλυνεν αὐτὸν ἐν φόβοις ἐχθρῶν. ἐν λόγοις αὐτοῦ σημεῖα κατέπαυσεν ἐδόξασεν [ὁ κύριος] αὐτὸν κατὰ πρόσωπον βασιλέων ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ πρὸς λαὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ.¹⁰⁰

1QM XI, 2-3: . . . You delivered into the hand of David, Your servant, because he trusted in Your great name and not in sword and spear (בשׂמכּה הגדול ולוא בחרב וחנית); for the battle is Yours. He subdued the Philistines many times by Your holy name (בשׂם קודשׁכּה). And by the hand of our kings You rescued us many times (בִּיד מלכֵינוּ הושַׁעֲתָנוּ) because of Your mercy.¹⁰¹

1QM XIII, 10, 12-13, 14: You appointed the Prince of Light from of old to assist us (וְשֵׁר מְאֹר מֵאִזּ פִּקְדָתָהּ לַעֲזֹרָנוּ) . . . But we [or: let us], in the lot of Your truth, rejoice in Your mighty hand. We rejoice in Your salvation

¹⁰⁰ In this hymn of praise to Moses, who receives some of the highest praise of any of the ancestors in Sir 44-50, God exalts Moses with great glory. Yet Ben Sira emphasizes the Lord’s agency (ἐδόξασεν [ὁ κύριος] αὐτὸν), and that Moses’ “glory” is like the “holy ones” (probably angels), not YHWH’s, and he is granted a vision of the Lord’s (distinct) glory. Further, the hymns of praise to the ancestors climaxes with Simon son of Onias leading Israel in worship of “the Almighty” in words similar to the language used for Jesus and the Father in Matthew: τότε πᾶς ὁ λαὸς κοινῇ κατέσπευσαν καὶ ἔπεσαν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν προσκυνῆσαι τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτῶν παντοκράτορι θεῷ ὑψίστῳ (50:17; cf. also the climactic benediction at 50:22-24). None of the exalted ancestors receive προσκύνησις, and YHWH’s agency is consistently stressed (cf. 47:5-6). Even Elijah, who raises the dead, is said to do it “by the word of the Most High” (ἐν λόγῳ ὑψίστου, 48:5).

¹⁰¹ This text, even while it goes on to invoke God’s promise of a “star from Jacob” (Num 24:17-19), stresses that only YHWH’s “hands” deliver (XI, 8, 11: ידיכּה) in order to make an “everlasting name” for himself (XI, 14: וילעשות לכה שם עולם)

(חה ביד גבורתכה ונשישה בישועתכה) . . . Who is like You in strength, O God of Israel, and yet Your mighty hand is with the oppressed. *What angel or prince is like You for [Your] effe[ctual]support?* (ומיא מלאך ושר כעזרת פו[עליכה...])¹⁰²

4Q521 (Frag. 2+4) II, 1-4, 6, 8-9, 11-13 : [. . . For the hea]vens and the earth shall listen to His Messiah (למשיחו) [and all w]hich is in them shall not turn away from the commandments of the holy ones (ממצות קדושים). Strengthen yourself, O you who seek the Lord, in his service

(התאמצו מבקשי אדני בעבדתו)!

Will you not find the Lord in this (הלוא בזאת תמצאו את אדני)? . . . Over the humble His spirit hovers and he renews the faithful in His strength . . .

He who sets prisoners free, opens the eyes of the blind, raises up those who are bo[wed down]. . . . And the Lord shall do glorious things (ונכבדות) (שלוא היו יעשה אדני) which have not been done . . . for He shall heal the critically wounded, He shall revive the dead (ומתים יחיה), He shall send good news to the afflicted . . .¹⁰³ (cf. also Fr. 7+5 II, 7-9)

1 Macc 3:19, 22: (Judas encouraging his troops) ὅτι οὐκ ἐν πλήθει δυνάμεως νίκη πολέμου ἐστὶν ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἡ ἰσχὺς . . . καὶ αὐτὸς [ὁ θεὸς] συντρίψει αὐτοὺς πρὸ προσώπου ἡμῶν ὑμεῖς δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθε ἀπ' αὐτῶν.

2 Macc 8:1-2, 5: Ιουδας δὲ ὁ καὶ Μακκαβαῖος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ παρεισπορευόμενοι λεληθότως εἰς τὰς κόμας προσεκαλοῦντο τοὺς συγγενεῖς . . . καὶ ἐπεκαλοῦντο τὸν κύριον ἐπιδεῖν τὸν ὑπὸ πάντων καταπατούμενον λαόν . . . γενόμενος δὲ ὁ Μακκαβαῖος ἐν συστέματι

¹⁰²The contrast between YHWH and his appointed agent, the “Prince of Light” (the archangel Michael), is instructive. Even though Michael is appointed to fight for Israel, he is no way compares with YHWH, who is the one who ultimately fights for Israel. Cf. also XIII, 2-9, which focuses on the praise of YHWH for his mighty works.

¹⁰³This text appears to ascribe mighty acts to the Messiah (the context is almost totally lost; also, למשיחו could be read as a plural), and probably sets his power on par with that of the angels (if the “Messiah” is in parallel with the “holy ones” in the next line). The accent of the (extant) passage, however, falls heavily on YHWH, and goes on to stress YHWH’s agency in accomplishing the “glorious things” associated with Isaiah’s vision of a new exodus/return from exile (Isa 35:5-6; 61:1). As James Charlesworth says, “The rumors that this text has the Messiah raise the dead is based on a dubious restoration and overlooks the fact that, in the immediate context, the governing subject (*nomen regens*) is clearly ‘the Lord’” (“A Study in Shared Symbolism and Language: The Qumran Community and the Johannine Community,” in *The Scrolls and Christian Origins* [ed. James H. Charlesworth; vol.3 of *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*; Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006], 124, n.81); So also Hermann Lichtenberger: “Dios es también expresamente el sujeto en 1.5-8. . . Dios [es] consumidor de las acciones de salvación” (“El Mesías como Hijo de Dios en la Sabiduría y la Apocalíptica,” in *Filiación*, 2:119); cf. also Florentino García Martínez, “Messianic Hopes,” in Florentino García Martínez and Julio Trebolle Barrera, *The People of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Writings, Beliefs, and Practices* [trans. Wilfred G.E. Watson; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1993], 168-70. Contra John J. Collins, “The Works of the Messiah,” *DSD* 1 (1994): 98-112. (note also, translation very slightly modified from Wise, et al.)

ἀνυπόστατος ἤδη τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐγίνετο τῆς ὀργῆς τοῦ κυρίου εἰς ἔλεον
τραπείσης.

Pss. Sol. 17:32, 33-4, 39-40: (re: the future Messiah) καὶ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς
δίκαιος διδασκὸς ὑπὸ θεοῦ . . . οὐ γὰρ ἐλπιδί ἐπὶ ἵππον καὶ ἀναβάτην καὶ
τόξον . . . κύριος αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς αὐτοῦ ἐλπίς τοῦ δυνατοῦ ἐλπίδι θεοῦ . .
. . ἡ ἐλπίς αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ κύριον καὶ τίς δύναται πρὸς αὐτόν . . . ἰσχυρὸς ἐν
ἔργοις αὐτοῦ καὶ κραταιὸς ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

T. Jud. 2:1-3:10; 22:3: Καὶ ἔδωκέ μοι κύριος χάριν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔργοις μου
ἐν τε τῷ ἀγρῷ καὶ ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ . . . long recital of Judah's mighty deeds . . .
εἶδε γὰρ ἐν ὁράματι περὶ ἐμοῦ ὅτι ἄγγελος δυνάμεως ἔπεταί μοι ἐν πᾶσι,
τοῦ μὴ ἡττᾶσθαι. . . καὶ αὐτὸς [ὁ θεὸς] φυλάξει κράτος βασιλείας μου
ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος. ὅρκῳ γὰρ ὤμοσέ μοι κύριος μὴ ἐκλείψαι τὸ βασιλείον
μου ἐκ τοῦ σπέρματός μου πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος.

Jos., Ant. 12:290, 300, 312: ὁ δὲ Ἰούδας ἀπαντήσας αὐτῷ καὶ συμβαλεῖν
προαιρούμενος ἐπεὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας ἑώρα πρὸς τὴν μάχην διὰ τε τὴν
ὀλιγότητα καὶ δι' ἀσιτίαν νενηστεύκεσαν γὰρ ὀκνοῦντας παρεθάρσυνεν
λέγων οὐκ ἐν τῷ πλήθει τὸ νικᾶν εἶναι καὶ κρατεῖν τῶν πολεμίων ἀλλ' ἐν
τῷ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον εὐσεβεῖν . . . καὶ παρεκελεύετο [ὁ Ἰούδας] τὰς ἐλπίδας
τῆς νίκης ἔχοντας ἐν τῷ θεῷ τοῦτον ἱκετεύειν τῷ πατρίῳ νόμῳ σάκκου
περιθεμένους¹⁰⁴ . . . ὑπέστρεψε χαίρων καὶ ὑμῶν τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ τοῖς
κατωρθωμένοις (cf. also 314, 316, 323).

T. Mos. 12:7: pro eis; non enim propter meam vir tutem aut infirmi tatem;
sed tempe rantius misericor diae ipsius et pati entia contergerunt mihi.¹⁰⁵

L.A.B. 27:4, 7, 13: . . . dixit Cenez: Quando fecerit Dominus salute populo
suo in manibus meis, tunc puniam viros istos . . . Et descendit Cenez
solus et oravit antequam descenderet et dixit: Domine Deus patrum
nostrorum . . . nunc unum de mirabilibus tuis mitte servo tuo, et
expugnabo inimicos tuos, ut sciant ipsi et omnes gentes et populus tuus,
quoniam non multitudine milicie neque in virtute equitum liberat Dominus
. . . Et ut audivit omnis Israel salute factam per manus Cenez, exierunt
universi populi unanimes in obviam ei, et dixerunt: Benedictus Dominus
qui te constituit ducem in populo suo . . . nunc visu videmus, apparent
opere sermonis Dei.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Here, Josephus invokes the notion found throughout much Second Temple literature that if Israel practices proper piety toward the Lord, he will grant them victory (cf. also 12:281, 285).

¹⁰⁵ Moses' statement occurs soon after he tells Joshua not to fall down before him and thus demean himself (12:1-3).

¹⁰⁶ At least three other texts deserve fuller discussion. Each contains elements similar to the more "exalted" christological patterns we have noted in Matt 14:22-33. These (and other) texts have often been used to suggest Matthew's (or other NT writers') portrait of Jesus fits the pattern of at least some human or angelic

agents in early Jewish literature. The problems with such an argument are twofold. First, the attempt to fit Jesus into more generalized “agency” category is just the sort of overgeneralizing that occludes more than it illuminates. Second – and related to the first point – these texts, while sharing certain similarities with Matthew, differ markedly from Matthew in their language for their respective agents.

Above we referenced the *Apocalypse of Abraham* (n. 65, 72) and here it is again relevant, since the angel “Yahoel” is the mediator of the divine name (10:3, 8), clearly reflected in the angel’s own name. Although this provides one of the few examples where a figure other than YHWH bears his name and reflects his glory (11:1-3; à la Exod 23:20-21), the dissimilarity with Matthew 14:27-33 is not only that Yahoel is never worshiped, but (1) the text stresses he is the *mediator* of the divine name and does not claim it for himself (10:3); (2) he requires Abraham to stand (not kneel) in his presence (10:5); (3) he blesses Abraham “in the name of God” (10:5); (4) when the “voice” of YHWH “comes,” both Yahoel and Abraham kneel together in worship (17:1-3, cf. also 10:2). Thus, like the pattern noted above, he consistently points to YHWH as the object of worship and salvation. (Because of its late date, I will not discuss Metatron in *3 Enoch*, who also bears the divine name. For a sound assessment of a similar distinction made between YHWH and Metatron in *3 Enoch* as in *Apoc. Ab.*, cf. Orlov, “Praxis of the Voice,” 63)

A second text worth considering briefly, though its (possible) late date and Christian influence (?) relativizes its importance for our discussion, is the chief angel in *Joseph and Aseneth*, who is described in terms similar to those used for “the Most High God” (14:8-10) and who receives what looks like “worship” from Aseneth (14:4, 10; 15:12-13). Though worthy of a fuller discussion, we can note again how the angel consistently defers to the “Most High God” by having Aseneth stand in his presence instead of kneel (14.7, 11), by consistently referring to salvation in the “Most High” (15:6-7; 16:7, 16), by blessing in the name of the “Lord God” (17.6), and by refusing to divulge his name lest Aseneth “praise and glorify” him (on the last point, cf. Richard Bauckham, *The Climax of Prophecy: Studies on the Book of Revelation* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 126). Of further importance is that the author uses “heavenly” and “worship” type language rather indiscriminately, such that when Aseneth puts on the heavenly garment, she bears an appearance very similar to that of the chief angel (18:9/14:3-4, 9; not unlike 2 *En.* 22:8-10); the result is that her “foster-father” is “filled with great fear” and “falls at her feet” (*Jos. Asen.* 18:11), just as she had done with the chief angel (14:10). It is, of course, manifest that Aseneth is not identified with Israel’s God and that the author does not endorse the “worship” of her, especially given her rather verbose repentance of idolatry. Literarily, her “post-repentance” vestige that shines gloriously stands in obvious contrast to her first meeting of Joseph, where she dresses in idolatrous clothing and is rejected by him (note the many verbal parallels between chapters 3-8 and 18-19). Rather than bearing the “ointment of destruction” from her idolatrous practices (8:5) she now, after repenting, reflects the glory of the “Most High” (18:9).

Finally, the Parables in *1 Enoch* 37-71 provide a complex and rather different case than those above. There are a number of striking parallels with portions of the synoptic Gospels, which are frequently discussed. There are, further, two points at which humans fall down before the Son of Man in what might be interpreted as “worship” (48:5; 62:9; cf. also 46:5). Nonetheless, the “agency” pattern we traced above still seems active vis-à-vis the Son of Man in the *Similitudes*, of which I offer a few examples. One, in chapter 48’s vision of both the time before creation and also the eschaton – where “all who dwell on the earth” fall down/worship (?) before the Son of Man – they actually “glorify, bless, and sing *the name of the Lord of Spirits*” (48:6, italics mine), the purpose for which the Son of Man comes forth (48:6). Two, it is in his [the Lord of Spirits’] “name” that the righteous are “saved” (48:7; contrast Jesus’ “name” in Matthew). Three, at the eschatological judgment, the righteous “stand” before the Son of Man (62:8), apparently in vindication, while the wicked rulers of the earth fall before the Son of Man in obeisance/worship (?) and supplication (62:9). Four, the Son of Man has no role in history other than at the final judgment. When the Son of Man is set on the “throne of glory” to judge the nations (61:8), he judges “by the word of the *name of the Lord of Spirits*” (61:9), and it is, again, the “*name of the Lord of Spirits*” that is “blessed, glorified, extolled, etc.” repeatedly (61:9, 11-12). The primary focus of the text is always “the Lord of Spirits,” while the Son of Man does indeed receive a remarkable degree of exaltation.

Charles Gieschen has made an intriguing argument that the Son of Man/Chosen One is in fact identified with YHWH, even while remaining distinct from him, because not only does the Chosen One

exist with YHWH before creation (48:2-3, 6; 62:7), but also, Gieschen argues, the name with which he is named is actually the divine Name. The pre-existent Chosen One's naming with the divine name is the theological logic for his reception of worship. That is, he does not simply "mediate" the divine Name, but it is in fact his name too (48:2-5; cf. 53:6; "The Name of the Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* [ed. Gabriele Boccaccini; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 240-1; cf. also Steven Richard Scott, "The Binitarian Nature of the Book of Similitudes," *JSP* 18 [2008]: 55-78). To Gieschen, only this "clear identification of the Son of Man *within the mystery of YHWH* by means of his possession of the Divine Name, his enthronement and worship depicted in 1 En 69 [and 48 and 61]" allows the author of 1 Enoch to avoid "idolatry" ("The Name," 249; emphasis added). In some ways, Gieschen's argument might carry conviction, not least in that it may make good sense of the (possible) worship the Son of Man receives along with the texts' focus on the "name of the Lord of Spirits," as we pointed out above. Moreover, a point that Gieschen does not make, but which potentially fits well with his argument, is that the Parables also create a close association between the Son of Man and YHWH's "Wisdom" (cf. Helge S. Kvanvig, "The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 190-2; J. J. Collins, "Enoch and the Son of Man: A Response to Sabino Chialà and Helge Kvanvig," in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man*, 225; Collins agrees with Kvanvig regarding Wisdom language being used for the Son of Man). The close identification of the Son of Man with YHWH's Name and Wisdom, along with the Son of Man's sitting on the divine throne (said of no other figure other than YHWH in Second Temple Judaism, Moses notwithstanding in Ezek. Trag.), his reception of worship (?), and his judgment of the nations may suggest that 1 Enoch's Son of Man is in some sense a "divine hypostasis," sharing in YHWH's identity, yet also distinct from him (for a defense of "hypostasis" language," cf. C. A. Gieschen, *Angelmorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* [AGJU 42; Leiden: Brill, 1998], 36-45).

There are a few problems with Gieschen's argument, however. First, the text does not say that the Son of Man is named "with" the name of the Lord of Spirits (48:3). This point in itself would not be a problem (since the name he is given remains mysterious), but in 61:10-11 the Son of Man (here, "The Chosen One") is among the entire heavenly host summoned to "bless the name of the Lord of Spirits." Is he blessing his own name? That seems unlikely, not only because he is acting here as part of a larger entourage, but also because "the name of the Lord of Spirits" and "the Lord of Spirits" appear to be used interchangeably here and elsewhere (e.g., 50:3; 61:12-13; 63:4, 7, often in parallel, as in the OT – e.g., Ps 96:2; 103:1; 145:21; cf. Deut 10:8; Sir 51:12). If the Son of Man does not share the divine name, then his role as judge is reduced to an intermediary one, since he judges "by the word of the name of the Lord of Spirits" (61:9), while it is the "name of the Lord of Spirits" that is "blessed, glorified, extolled, etc." repeatedly (61:9, 11-12). Second, the text may actually mitigate the "worship" the Son of Man receives. In 62:8, "all the chosen" are said to "stand" in the presence of the Son of Man, while it is the wicked rulers of the earth who fall before him in "obedience/worship (?)" and supplication" (62:9). The "chosen ones" do not appear to "worship" the Son of Man, nor do the heavenly host, yet the heavenly host and the wicked of the earth *do* resoundingly worship the "Lord of Spirits" (61:9-13; 63:1-12; cf. 57:3). Further, the supplication the wicked make to the Son of Man is that they "might fall down and worship *in the presence of the Lord of Spirits*" (63:1; emphasis added). These points suggest that (1) the Son of Man probably does not share the divine Name, (2) is not a "divine hypostasis," but that his identity should be explained otherwise, and (3) that the "worship" he receives is distinct from that which is given to the Lord of Spirits, and should therefore be rendered "obedience/homage" [or some such]).

As noted above, 1 Enoch, in my view, takes measures common to contemporary Jewish literature to return constantly to a focus on the "Lord of Spirits," such that the weight of worship language and praxis is overwhelmingly focused on him, while it significantly limits the Son of Man's role (and obedience received) to the eschatological final judgment. In doing this, 1 Enoch reflects the influence of Isaiah, especially Isa 40-55, as is commonly acknowledged (cf. James C. Vanderkam, "Biblical Interpretation in 1 Enoch and Jubilees," in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* [JSOTSup 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000], 295-6; Helge S. Kvanvig, "The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch," 188; George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* [2d ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005], 250-3; Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch: A New English*

Even in the example above where Achior falls down in προσκύνῃσις before Judith (14:7), once she informs him of the manner in which the events transpired (14:8), his attention turns to “all that the God of Israel” had done (14:10), and he becomes a proselyte (14:10).¹⁰⁷ I do not wish to advocate for a simplistic view of Second Temple Judaism,¹⁰⁸

Edition with Commentary and Textual notes [SVTP 7; Leiden: Brill, 1985], 210). As we saw earlier, Isaiah envisions a day when the nations will come and “pay homage” (προσκυνήσουσιν) to Israel (45:14). Yet, as in *1 Enoch*, the προσκύνῃσις they receive is not “worship,” but part and parcel of their vindication before their enemies (i.e. political subjugation), which proves, ἐν σοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐστὶν καὶ ἐροῦσιν οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς πλὴν σοῦ, and, Ἰσραὴλ σφύζεται ὑπὸ κυρίου σωτηρίαν αἰώνιον (Isa 45:14, 17). Such an Isaianic context makes good sense of the wicked “doing obeisance” before the Son of Man while the Lord’s “chosen ones” stand in vindication. Regarding the identity of the Son of Man in the *Similitudes*, whether or not chapters 70-71 are a later interpolation (which seems likely), the identification of Enoch with the Son of Man (71:14) may point us in the right direction. That is, the Son of Man serves as the foil to the wicked of the earth – though they are powerful in their earthly rule and seek glory and honor for themselves, setting their “hope on the throne of our glory” (63:7), in the end they will be brought low. The Lord will in fact exalt the righteous one(s) to the “throne of glory” (e.g., 62:2-3, 13-16), while the wicked are judged.

The point I wish to make is not that these portions of *1 Enoch* are totally dissimilar from what we observe throughout Matthew. Indeed, the descriptions of the Son of Man’s (eternal?) pre-existence (48:2-3, 6), glory, and judgment, along with OT messianic intertexts (e.g., 62:1-2/Isa 11:1-4) suggest a very close association of the Son of Man with “the Lord of Spirits,” and it creates a portrait of the Son of Man in some ways similar to Matthew’s of Jesus. I do wish to argue, however, that the difference between the *Similitudes* and Matt 14:33 (and other portions of Matthew) is instructive, because it yields a clearer perception of how Matthew has gone beyond Jewish language for human and angelic intermediaries and stands more in the vein of Jewish ways of speaking about divine “hypostases” (e.g., the Name, Wisdom, the Glory), the effect of which is to create a *Verbindung* between the identity of Father and Son. (See also the discussions of the Son of Man in *1 Enoch* 37-71, which differ from one another, in Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 38-39, and Richard Bauckham, “The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus,” in *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies of the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008], 169-72). Finally, Paul Rainbow’s comments on Enoch’s Son of Man are helpful as well: “The tendency towards the deification of the Messiah may have had room to develop in connection with this apocalyptic figure because he was viewed as celestial in origin and *was entirely to be awaited in the future, whence he could not threaten devotion to the one God in the present*” (“Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8.4-6” [D. Phil Thesis, Oxford University, 1987], 83; emphasis added; I would argue that the same assessment applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the heavenly Melchizedek in 11Q13, who mediates forgiveness and judgment, but is not worshiped). Matthew’s depiction of worshiping Jesus both in his human life and continually in his exalted state is quite obviously a different story.

¹⁰⁷ Judith in fact makes interesting literary-theological use of the word προσκυνέω. It is repeatedly emphasized that Israel “worships” (προσκυνέω) God alone (5:8; 6:18; 8:18; 10:8; 13:17; 16:18), so that when she “bows down” (προσεκύνησεν) before Holofernes (10:23), the reader understands it as pious duplicity and imitation of pagan behavior (especially since 10:8 has just emphasized that she “worships” [προσεκύνησεν] God). In the report of Judith’s success, everyone acts “in character” – the Jews hear of her exploits and “worship” (προσεκύνησαν) God (13:17), while Achior, a pagan, “bows down” (προσεκύνησεν) before Judith (14:7) when he hears of her deeds. The latter should probably be taken in two ways. One, it is an ironic reversal of the προσκύνῃσις offered to Holofernes and thus vindication of Judith (and Israel) over her pagan enemies (thus fulfilling a common prophetic theme; e.g., Isa 49:7, 23). Two, however, the narrative re-invokes its repeated censure of προσκύνῃσις (which might be taken as “worship”) before any figure but God by the redirecting of Achior’s attention to Israel’s God: “When

or to suggest that one cannot find more ambiguous texts.¹⁰⁹ Nonetheless, the texts above, taken from a variety of early Jewish literature, do represent something of a “common” linguistic pattern or set of grammatical “rules,” the contents of which sensitize us to how Jewish writers frequently articulated God’s use of human and angelic agents: while God’s servants are often highly exalted, they are neither treated as the ultimate agents’ of their mighty deeds nor is their praise to be confused with the praise due to Israel’s God. This divine-human agency schema is, of course, a function of Israel’s more fundamental confession of YHWH as the one true Lord, Creator and Ruler of all, who is worshiped accordingly. As Paul Rainbow observes in his lengthy study of the “schema” of ancient Jewish monotheism language, while “beings other than the one God might share divine titles or functions . . . the transfer of divine titles and functions to intermediaries in Judaism was limited. It is hard to find an example, other than the Son of Man, Philo’s Logos, or personified wisdom in the *Wisdom of Solomon*, where multiple divine titles or functions were ascribed to a single intermediary.”¹¹⁰ Stuckenbruck’s observations are equally salient:

Achior saw all that the God of Israel had done, he believed in God exceedingly, and he circumcised the flesh of his foreskin and was added to the house of Israel” (14:10).

¹⁰⁸ Cf. chpt. 1, n. 81.

¹⁰⁹ Cf., e.g., Jacob Chinitz, “Moses: Intermediary or Teacher?” *JBQ* 30 (2002): 196-200 for a brief but interesting discussion of some of the ambiguous texts about Moses.

¹¹⁰ Paul A. Rainbow, “Monotheism and Christology,” 43. Personified Wisdom is God’s “agent” in a rather different way from human or angelic figures. Though there is no space to argue for it here, I agree with Bauckham that God’s Wisdom is intrinsic to his identity, which accounts for the consistent use of YHWH-type language and motifs for Wisdom (e.g., *Wis 7*; *1 En 84*; *2 En 33*; cf. Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998], 17-20; cf. also Hans-Friedrich Weiss, *Untersuchungen zur Kosmologie des hellenistischen und palästinischen Judentums* [TUGAL 97; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966], 199-200; Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaic Religion in the Second Temple Period: Belief and Practice from the Exile to Yavneh* [New York: Routledge, 2000], 225-8). It is instructive to note that, considering the many texts canvassed above that stress the unique action of Israel’s God in the exodus, *Wisdom of Solomon* attributes that action to Wisdom (10:18-19), with the result that Israel sings hymns to the Lord’s “holy name” (10:20). The text thereby re-emphasizes its

Though there are many texts which describe divine agent figures who perform functions associated with God, the writers are often reticent to reinforce the honored position of such a figure with an outright claim that these are to be worshiped. Where “worship” language is directed at such figures, it does not occur in liturgical formulas which reflect the practices of a given religious community.¹¹¹

The pattern in Matt 14:22-33, and indeed throughout the narrative, is quite distinct from the common pattern above. In the midst of performing that which was unique to YHWH’s lordship (walking on the sea), Jesus utters the divine-revelation formula for himself, is twice addressed as κύριε in an obviously theophanic setting, again controls creation (by rescuing Peter and stilling the storm), and as a result receives the προσκύνησις and confession of the disciples that loudly echoes Israel’s confessions of YHWH’s lordship. Nor, as we also noted in the pericope with the leper (8:1-4), does Matthew insert anything that would deflect the disciples’ worship away from Jesus. There is no mitigating statement from Jesus – “bless/worship God!” – or from the narrator – “God worked the miracles *by* Jesus’ hand.” Both the agent of the action (Jesus) and the recipients maintain a christological focus throughout that bears the marks of Israel’s language about – and devotion to – its κύριος.

At this point it will also be helpful to recall several of the OT and Second Temple passages we examined in chapter 1, especially from Isaiah, the Psalms, and Qumran, where the nations are shown rendering προσκύνησις (חנה) to YHWH’s servant (Isa 49:7; 1QSb V, 28), or Israel (Isa 49:23; 1QM XII, 14; 4Q246 II, 7), or the (eschatological)

earlier description of Wisdom: ἀτμίς . . . τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δυνάμεως καὶ ἀπόρροια τῆς τοῦ παντοκράτορος δόξης (7:25). Philo’s Logos is a different can of worms altogether, on which I do not have the competence to proffer an interpretation, but see the discussion in Rainbow, “Monotheism and Christology,” 94-6.

¹¹¹ Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Worship and Monotheism in the *Ascension of Isaiah*,” in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism*, 88. See also n. 90 above.

Davidic King (Ps 72/1:11).¹¹² Matt 14:22-33, however, utilizes προσκύνησις language that moves in a decidedly different direction. As we saw in Isaiah, the προσκύνησις offered to the servant and Israel is more fully defined as their vindication by YHWH, exemplified in the humble obeisance offered by their former oppressors (likewise in 1QSb and 4Q246). And, the obeisance offered to the Servant and to Israel, in both cases, is a function of the nations' recognition of YHWH's unique Lordship. So also in Ps 72, it is the (hostile) nations/Gentiles who bow before the Davidic king in recognition of his justice, righteousness, and rule over the nations (72/1:8-9, 11-14), while the climactic confession is: εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ποιῶν θαυμάσια μόνος (72/1:18).¹¹³ In each of these cases the political subjugation of Israel's enemies is in view.

In Matt 14:22-33, however, Jesus receives προσκύνησις not from humbled enemies as a sign of vindication or as exaltation over the Gentiles who will be forced to "lick the dust from his feet" (Isa 49:23; Ps 72/1:9), but from his own disciples who recognize in his words and deeds the power of Israel's God. The disciples' worship in 14:22-33, that is, is not so much a "fulfillment" of texts like Isa 49:7 and Ps 72 but rather more precisely in line with Matthew's christological appropriation of Isaiah's vision of YHWH's advent (Matt 3:3; 11:3, 10-14; Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1). The disciples' worship of the

¹¹² Such texts possibly influenced Matthew's portrait of Jesus and may have even provided a precedent for Matthew's προσκυνέω motif, not least in consideration of his portrait of Jesus as Isaiah's servant (e.g., 12:18-22) and the Davidic Messiah (e.g., 1:1; 9:27, etc.) (cf. William Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* [London: SCM Press, 1998], esp. 127-40).

¹¹³ Note the emphatic μόνος at the end of the clause. Further, there is rather consistent use of the motif of Israel's enemies bowing before them in texts that have an eschatological trajectory (at least, as interpreted by later readers). Not only the texts above, but also several other texts – Dan 7:13-14/27; 1QM XII, 14, XIX, 6; *1 En.* 62:9; 90:30 – demonstrate this pattern (all of which are probably influenced by Isa 49). Interestingly, these texts consistently stress (as I argued above re: *1 En.*) that it is the *nations/Gentiles/wicked* who do obeisance to God's chosen one (the king, Son of Man, servant, etc.), while these texts also show Israel *co-exalted* with the "one like a son of man" (e.g., Dan. 7:27) or *standing* in his presence (*1 En.* 62:8). That is, the bowing before Israel by the nations is a vision of political subjugation.

filial κύριος, who sovereignly rescues his people in their distress, could be said to instantiate and “fulfill” Isaiah’s vision of YHWH’s return to his people:

οὕτως λέγει κύριος ὁ διδοὺς ὁδὸν ἐν θαλάσῃ καὶ ἐν ὕδατι ἰσχυρῶ τρίβον
. . . μὴ μνημονεύετε τὰ πρῶτα καὶ τὰ ἀρχαῖα μὴ συλλογίζεσθε. ἰδοὺ ποιῶ
καινὰ ἃ νῦν ἀνατελεῖ καὶ γνώσεσθε αὐτά καὶ ποιήσω ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ὁδὸν
καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀνύδρῳ ποταμούς (Isa 43:16-19).¹¹⁴

V. Worshiping the Son

In light of the foregoing discussion, the question we have been asking – how Matthew can adhere to Israel’s most fundamental loyalty to “the Lord God” *and* narrate Jesus as the mutual recipient of that loyalty – applies its greatest pressure here at 14:33. If Matthew wished to mitigate questions about how worshiping Jesus cohered with the narrative’s – and the broader Jewish – exclusive commitment to Israel’s God, he did a rather poor job of it. Everything we have seen thus far in the narrative, however, and especially here, suggests these are exactly the questions the Gospel is raising.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ I do not cite this text at random. Rather, the connection between Matt 14:22-33 and Isaiah’s vision of the eschatological recognition of YHWH’s Lordship (chpts 40-55) is of a piece with his evocation of Israel’s exodus. First, as already discussed, after Matt 13, the narrative shifts to focus on the “new” people formed around Jesus – i.e., his disciples. For Matthew, it is those who follow Israel’s Messiah who are Isaiah’s Israel redeemed from exile (Matt 1:17, 21, 23). It is not insignificant that at this point in the story, when Jesus has turned his focus to establishing his new community, he rescues them from the watery chaos and they confess his true identity for the first time. Second, as we also pointed out above, there are numerous echoes of the exodus and Isa 40-55 throughout Matt 14:22-33, thus giving the impression that Jesus’ rescue of the disciples on the sea is typologically related to YHWH’s first (and eschatological) deliverance of his people from bondage/exile. Three, the close connection between Jesus’ self-declaration/saving action and the disciples’ worship/confession parallels Isaiah’s vision of YHWH’s rescue of his people (in exodus-like fashion) and the recognition that he is κύριος. Fourth, the preceding feeding of the five thousand in the wilderness recalls exodus/new exodus motifs. Fifth, Matthew draws on Isaiah repeatedly throughout the narrative, especially Isa 40-55, making its influence in 14:22-33 all the more likely.

¹¹⁵ It bears repeating, as noted in the previous chapter, that in the subsequent episode with the “Pharisees and scribes” (15:1), Jesus chastises them for their “vain worship” (15:9), while also following that episode with the Canaanite woman’s “worship” of Jesus (15:25). The combination of three (a Matthean favorite) episodes in a row in which “worship” features prominently further heightens the christological import of Matthew’s worship motif here.

Finally, then, we turn to the disciples' actual confession in 14:33: ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ. We have discussed already the contrast between this confession and the confused identification of Jesus in 13:55 (ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός). Interestingly, however, while Peter has twice called upon Jesus as κύριος in a manner strongly reminiscent of Israel's calling upon its κύριος (vv. 28, 30), in the end the disciples do not confess him with any of the epithets used by other human characters in the story ("Lord," "son of David," "teacher"), but as "Son of God" (θεοῦ υἱός). Davies and Allison argue that the disciples' confession of Jesus as the Son of God "refers to Jesus not in his capacity as a simple wonder-worker but in his status as revealer of the Father."¹¹⁶ Luz concludes that the disciples' worship and confession "is much more conceivable in the 'ship of the church' than in a boat on a lake that is still in the midst of a storm."¹¹⁷ While certainly as the Son Jesus reveals the Father, and in the disciples' confession the Church's confession is not far from view, these interpretations seem, from our foregoing discussion, yet to have brought into sharp enough focus the narrative-theological logic of 14:33.

First, the focus of the passage is not particularly on Jesus as "revealer of the Father" inasmuch as the passage, as we have sought to show above, remains squarely centered on the *Son's* identity. The Son is the one who wields power over creation, because he is the "Lord," the "I am he" who "walks on the sea as on dry ground" (Job 9:8). To say the "Son reveals the Father" suffices only if by that we mean, to borrow a phrase, ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος [ὁ πατήρ] ποιῇ, ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ (John 5:19), and, ὁ ἑώρακώς ἐμὲ ἑώρακεν τὸν πατέρα (John 14:9). In 14:22-33, to see the Son is to see him

¹¹⁶ *Matthew*, 2:510; so also Grundmann, *Matthäus*, 369.

¹¹⁷ *Matthew*, 2:322.

as the filial repetition of the Father, doing what he does, speaking as he speaks, indeed, naming himself with the Father's name and receiving the worship due to the Father. On the other hand, such a revelation of the Son, the narrative insists, only comes through the Father. In 14:22-33 the Father has granted the disciples and the reader a unique glimpse into his Son (cf. 11:25-7; 16:17); and it is a glimpse that (re)molds and deepens all of the readers' previous and subsequent hearings of Jesus as "Son."

For these reasons a judgment like North's falls flat as well. To North, Jesus is "worshiped" (or better, shown "obeisance/respect") in 14:33 out of "wonder and gratitude," and because he gives a "display of power," but the "worship" in 14:33 (and elsewhere in Matt) does not have in view the devotion due to the one God.¹¹⁸ On the contrary, however, the disciples do not render Jesus προσκύνησις in 14:33 because he performs a one-off "miracle" by which their estimation of him remains fundamentally unaltered. Rather, their entire experience of him in this episode (along with the reader's) necessarily reconfigures their comprehension of his *identity*. Their προσκύνησις and confession is not one possible response among many, but the only possible one to the Son who is Lord over creation. From this point on, Matthew leaves no doubt that worship is inseparable from the confession of Jesus as "Son of God."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ J. Lionel North, "Jesus and Worship, God and Sacrifice," in *Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism* (eds. Loren T. Stuckenbruck; Wendy E.S. North; JSNTSup 263; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 188, 189.

¹¹⁹ One could get at this point from a different angle by asking, in Austinian terms, what the "performative" effect of a text like 14:33 is. If the disciples are a model for the audience(s) of the Gospel, which has been shown to be entirely likely by various scholars, Matt 14:33 (and others, e.g., 28:9, 17) in fact generates a certain form of religious life –worship of the Son that is indistinguishable from that which is given to his Father (on "performative" language, cf. J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things with Words* [2d. ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975]; also, Charles Taylor, "Language and Human Nature," in idem, *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers I* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], esp. 234). See also the insightful discussion in Kruijf, *Der Sohn des Lebendigen Gottes*, 78-9. On the disciples as models for the reader, see, e.g., A. T. Lincoln, "Matthew – A Story for Teachers," in *The Bible in the Three*

Yet the divine-filial language here is precisely the way in which the narrative navigates the dialectical assertion of loyalty to the “Lord God” of Israel and to the filial κύριος Jesus. While Jesus’ identity and the worship he receives attendant to that identity is the focus of 14:22-33, there is not a *Vermischung* of the paternal and filial κύριοι, a relativizing of the worship the Son receives, or a rivalry between Father and Son. Rather, he is fully worshiped as the *Son*, who necessarily derives his identity from the Father, even while the Father’s identity cannot be articulated, in Matthew’s Gospel, apart from his Son (cf. chpt. 5 below). To put it differently, the Son is worshiped as the Lord over creation, even while his rescuing power nonetheless redounds to the glory of the Father, as Matthew elsewhere asserts (cf. 15:31; *opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt*).¹²⁰

Second, whether or not Matthew is evoking allegorically the worship of the later first-century Church, the function of the confession *in the narrative* should be brought into greater focus. First, there is a consistent literary-theological motif at work in the four pivotal narrative moments when Jesus’ divine-filial identity is revealed: all include strongly theophanic elements, as the chart below indicates (some elements are out of order for ease of comparison):

Dimensions (eds. D. J. A. Clines, S. E. Fowl and S. E. Porter; JSOT 87; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 103-26.

¹²⁰ The theological logic at work here is not unlike that which is at work in the divine “hypostases” in Second Temple Judaism that Bauckham and Rainbow have described as intrinsic to the divine identity (cf. Bauckham, *God Crucified*, 20-22; Rainbow, “Monotheism,” 96). Weiss puts it interestingly: “Gerade die Sap Sal macht deutlich, daß das jüdische Hypostasen-Denken noch andere Möglichkeiten sah zwischen den beiden Extremen von „poetischer Personifikation“ einerseits und „selbständiger Gestalt neben Gott“ andererseits, ohne sogleich in solchen und ähnlichen Spekulationen einen Widerspruch gegen den Satz von der Einzigkeit Gottes zu sehen” (*Untersuchungen zur Kosmologie*, 200).

<p>3:16-17</p> <p>βαπτισθεῖς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εὐθὺς ἀνέβη ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος·</p> <p><u>καὶ ἰδοὺ ἠνεώχθησαν οἱ οὐρανοί, καὶ εἶδεν πνεῦμα θεοῦ καταβαῖνον ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν ἐρχόμενον ἐπ’ αὐτόν·</u></p> <p><u>καὶ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν λέγουσα·</u></p> <p><u>οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα.</u></p>	<p>17:5-7</p> <p>ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος</p> <p><u>ἰδοὺ νεφέλη φωτεινὴ ἐπεσκίασεν αὐτούς,</u></p> <p><u>καὶ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῆς νεφέλης λέγουσα·</u></p> <p><u>οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα· ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ.</u></p> <p><u>καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ μαθηταὶ</u></p> <p><u>ἔπεσαν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν καὶ</u></p> <p><u>ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα.</u></p> <p><u>καὶ προσῆλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἀνάμενος αὐτῶν εἶπεν· ἐγέρθητε καὶ μὴ φοβεῖσθε</u></p>	<p>27:51-2, 54</p> <p><u>ἰδοὺ τὸ καταπέτασμα τοῦ ναοῦ ἐσχίσθη ἀπ’ ἄνωθεν ἕως κάτω εἰς δύο καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐσεισθη καὶ αἱ πέτραι ἐσχίσθησαν, καὶ τὰ μνημεῖα ἀνεώχθησαν</u></p> <p><u>ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος.</u></p> <p><u>ἰδόντες τὸν σεισμόν καὶ τὰ γενόμενα</u></p> <p><u>ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα, λέγοντες·</u></p>	<p>14:25-27, 30, 33</p> <p><u>τετάρτη δὲ φυλακῇ τῆς νυκτὸς ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς περιπατῶν ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν.</u></p> <p><u>ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.</u></p> <p><u>ἰδόντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης περιπατοῦντα</u></p> <p><u>προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ</u></p> <p><u>ἐταράχθησαν λέγοντες ὅτι φάντασμα ἐστίν, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ φόβου ἔκραξαν.</u></p> <p><u>εὐθὺς δὲ ἐλάλησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς αὐτοῖς λέγων· θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε.</u></p>
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The shared motifs, language, and structure of these accounts once again suggests their mutually-interpretive function. Of the many points to be made, we mention only three relevant to the current discussion. One, the climactic content of all four theophanies is the revelation of Jesus as “Son.” Two, Matthew adds a unique element to Mark’s transfiguration; when the Father announces the Son’s identity, the disciples “fall on their faces” (17:6; cf. Mark 9:7-8), which forges a linguistic/conceptual link between the transfiguration and the disciples’ προσκύνησις of Jesus as Son of God in 14:33. For Matthew, the revelation of Jesus’ identity is a *theophany* of a uniquely *filial* sort. Third, the disciples’ confession at 14:33 is recalled in the nearly identical confession of the centurion: ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς ἦν οὗτος (27:54). There is little doubt that these two confessions should be read together.¹²¹ Linguistically, they mirror one another uniquely in the Gospel. Thematically, they not only contain theophanic elements, but it is the “seeing” of those theophanic elements that elicits great fear and the subsequent confession of Jesus’ divine-filial identity.

But at the crucifixion there is an ironic reversal. There, the Son’s identity comes to expression through his ignominious death, his self-giving that “ransoms many” (20:28) and effects eschatological forgiveness (26:28). We noted above that 14:22-33 brings to expression Jesus’ identity in one of the most concentrated ways in the Gospel – here he is “most himself.” Yet one must make the same comment about 27:54 – here, in his self-giving, he is “most himself” (cf. 1:21). Reading 14:33 and 27:54 together pressures the reader to articulate Jesus’ divine-filial identity dialectically – he is revealed as the Son in

¹²¹ Noted by many; cf., e.g., Angel, “Son of God as Divine Warrior,” 315; Meier, *The Vision of Matthew*, 33-5. On earthquakes and changes in the cosmos as theophanic elements, cf., e.g., *1 En.* 1:6; *T. Mos.* 10:4; 4Q381 X (Fr. 24); *L.A.B.* 6:16; 11:4-5.

his Lordship over creation, and he is revealed as the Son in his self-giving obedience on the cross. He is not the Son *despite* his death, but is revealed as the Son precisely there *and* in his rule over creation. Or, rather, ruling and rescuing, self-giving and suffering constitute the “grammar” of Jesus’ identity as Son in Matthew’s Gospel; they are two movements in the one Son’s lordship – this is what it looks like to be the Son of God.¹²²

Finally, too quick of a jump to identifying the disciples’ worship and confession in 14:33 with later Church praxis disrupts the continuity the narrative achieves between Jesus’ earthly and resurrected/heavenly identity.¹²³ As we noted earlier, so also here we should not miss that the authority Jesus possesses as the resurrected one in 28:18-20 is already proleptically present in his earthly life as the Son; he is the one to whom the Father has entrusted “all” (11:27) not at any particular moment in the narrative, but on the logic of the paternal-filial relation between them.¹²⁴ The identity of Father and Son, who share lordship over all things and the worship attendant to that lordship, is united not only in Jesus’ exaltation to the Father’s right hand (26:64), but in his human life as well.

VI. Retrospective and Prospective Effects of 14:22-33

One final comment is necessary before moving beyond this passage. We argued above that this passage and the temptation episode play unique roles in the narrative by unveiling the secret of Jesus’ divine-filial identity more clearly than anywhere else. That is, they serve as pivots upon which the readers’ understanding of Jesus’ identity turns. It

¹²² See the comments above on Matthew’s “horizontal” and “vertical” christology.

¹²³ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:322. Luz elsewhere stresses the unified identity of the earthly and exalted Jesus (“The Disciples in the Gospel According to Matthew,” 129, 133).

¹²⁴ Cf. Kruijf, *Der Sohn des Lebendigen Gottes*, 75 (commenting on Matt 11:25-7).

has long been argued that the logic of a narrative rests on the fact that “what remains to be read will restructure the provisional meanings of the already read.”¹²⁵ So also the προσκύνησις the disciples render to Jesus in 14:33 deepens and reforms the way the reader has heard Matthew’s προσκύνησις language to this point and will hear it in what follows. What we have heard as hints and intimations of “divine” worship previously now become clear. The dramatic irony at play in the actions of many of Jesus’ supplicants – even deceitful Herod – recedes in 14:33; the gap between the characters’ and the readers’ knowledge is (largely) closed. The one to whom the disciples and others have rendered προσκύνησις is indeed, so argues 14:22-33, the ruler of the created order and the savior of his people to whom προσκύνησις is due. Put otherwise, the προσκύνησις of 14:33 provides the key for a “hermeneutic” reading of Matthew’s consistent use of that same language elsewhere; Matt 14:22-33 “decodes” the “ungrammaticality.” Israel’s most fundamental response to κύριος ὁ θεός (4:10), Lord of heaven and earth (11:25), now belongs also to θεοῦ υἱός, the son of David and filial κύριος.

¹²⁵ Cf. Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 23; cf. also Riffaterre’s comments on “retroactive reading” (Michael Riffaterre, *Semiotics of Poetry* [Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1978], 5-6).

Excursus 1: Texts Related to Matthew's Christological appropriation of Israel's worship language

Excursus 1.1 Matt 21:1-17 – Praising the Son of David in the Temple

There is another scene in Matthew's Gospel – Jesus' entry into Jerusalem – that further points to the christological reshaping of Israel's worship for which we have been arguing. The passage does not contain προσκυνέω language, but rather other language from Israel's liturgical tradition that, when considered alongside Matthew's use of προσκυνέω, further reinforces our proposal thus far – Jesus' inclusion in the worship of Israel's God. As we will see below, the christological significance of this passage has frequently been overlooked both in its details and in its place in the broader narrative.

We sidestep here a host of interpretive issues in 21:1-17 in order to come directly to our point of concern – the “Hosannas” and “praise” offered to the son of David as he approaches Jerusalem (21:9) and heals in the Temple (21:14-16). The christological reordering of Israel's worship with the entry of “the Lord” (ὁ κύριος, 21:3) into the holy city and the Temple can be laid out in several points.

Hosanna to the son of David

Before discussing discrete verses within Matthew's account of the entry into Jerusalem, we should briefly note how Matthew has shaped the trajectory of the account to reflect broader christological concerns endemic to his narrative – the identity and

worship of Jesus, the son of David, the Son of God.¹²⁶ First, broadly speaking, Matthew follows Mark's account for the first eight verses (cf. Mark 11:1-9),¹²⁷ but introduces an interesting change to Mark that adumbrates the controversy to come – in Matthew, the Hosannas are directed *to* the son of David (ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαβὶδ, 21:9).

Second, after the welcome by the crowds, in 21:10-11 Matthew includes an explicit question about Jesus' identity not found in Mark (τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος;). Many commentators defend the crowds' answer – οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ προφήτης Ἰησοῦς – “as neither inadequate or anticlimactic.”¹²⁸ But such a judgment abstracts the crowds' acclamation from the broader narrative, which has raised this precise issue a number of times already, and has *already* provided the “fullest” answer.¹²⁹ Jesus is *not* one of the prophets or John the Baptist *redivivus* (16:14); he is the Christ, the Son of the living God who is revealed by the Father alone (11:27; 16:16; 3:17; 17:5); he is the one greater than the Temple, Solomon and Jonah (12:6, 41-2); he is “Lord” of the Sabbath (12:8); he is the Son who is worshiped as the ruler of creation (14:33; cf. 8:27).

Further, that the question about Jesus' identity is indeed evoking and re-opening the central question the narrative seeks to answer is further indicated by the literary flow of the subsequent events (Matt 21-22). Repeatedly, Matthew makes Jesus' identity – both

¹²⁶ On some of the structural features of 21:1-17 that hold it together as a literary unit, see Norbert Lohfink, “Der Messiaskönig und seine Armen kommen zum Zion,” in *Studien zum Matthäus: Festschrift für Wilhelm Pesch* (ed. Ludger Schenke; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 1988), 185-8.

¹²⁷ There are, of course, a number of well-known changes Matthew makes to Mark (e.g., the two donkeys).

¹²⁸ E.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:127; Fiedler, *Matthäusevangelium*, 324; But cf. Gnllka, *Matthäus*, 2:204.

¹²⁹ For an insightful discussion of the matter, see J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup CII; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 207-25, esp. 222-5. Cousland concludes, convincingly, that the crowds' acclamation of Jesus as “prophet” in 21:10 foreshadows what Jesus predicts about Jerusalem – it is the place that kills the prophets; cf. also L'Eplattenier's structure (Charles L'Eplattenier, “La Sequence Mattheenne de Jesus au Temple: Matthieu 21/10-24/2” *ETR* 53 [1978]: 514); Donald J. Versepunt, “Jesus' Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and Encounter in the Temple: a Geographical Motif in Matthew's Gospel,” *NovT* 2 (1994): 115-19.

in the questioning of his authority¹³⁰ and in the parables Jesus tells¹³¹ – a central issue. Indeed, with his inclusion of this initial question in 21:10 – τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος – he creates an *inclusio* with Jesus’ final encounter with the leadership in the Temple: τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ; τίνος υἱός ἐστιν; (22:42). The question turns on exactly the same issue with which his entry into Jerusalem began – his identity (22:41-46).¹³² Once again, then, the shape of the narrative reframes the way we hear the characters’ words and perceive their actions. That they acclaim him prophet and son of David is surely right on one level, but those terms, for the reader, are taken up into Matthew’s larger vision – this son of David, this prophet, is, in fact, David’s κύριος, the Son of God.¹³³ Thus, the question – τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος – evokes for the reader the entire narrative’s answer to Jerusalem’s question, and it is with that narratively-shaped account of Jesus’ identity that one encounters his action in the Temple and the controversy over the praise offered to the “son of David.”

Third, then, all of these factors are in play when we come to the unique material with which Matthew brings Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem and the Temple to its initial climax (21:14-16). Unlike Mark, wherein the Temple “cleansing” (a day later than Matthew) prompts the leaders to seek a way to destroy Jesus (11:18), Matthew shows no interest in the leaders’ immediate response to that episode. Rather, he reintroduces in 21:15 the theme adumbrated in 21:9 – the crying out (κράζοντας) of “Hosanna to the son

¹³⁰ The question in 21:23 – ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιεῖς; καὶ τίς σοι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην; – hearkens back to Jesus’ declaration in 11:27: Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς μου. It is, the reader knows, his Father who has “given” him this authority.

¹³¹ Jesus is the “son” sent by the vineyard owner (21:37-38); he is the “son” for whom the king gives a banquet (22:2; “son” being unique to Matthew here; cf. Luke 14:16).

¹³² On the literary structure of 21:10-24:2, see the outline and a number of insightful comments in L’Eplattenier, “La Sequence,” 514-18.

¹³³ For a fuller discussion of Matt 22:41-46, see chapter 5.

of David” – which then becomes the point of controversy and eventuates in a third affirmation of “praise” to Jesus – God himself has ordained it (21:16; Ps 8:3).

While we will consider the progression of the passage in more detail below, the broad overview above highlights (1) Matthew’s concentrated focus on the christological issue of praising the “son of David,”¹³⁴ and (2) how the passage’s embeddedness in the larger narrative guides hermeneutically the readers’ perception of the issue. We turn now to a more detailed consideration of the passage.

21:9

When compared to the other three Gospels, Matthew’s wording for the crowds’ initial acclamation is conspicuous on several levels:

Matt 21:9	Mark 11:9-10	Luke 19:39	John 12:13
ὡσαννὰ <u>τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ</u> .	ὡσαννά.		ὡσαννά.
εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος	εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος	εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος,	εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος
ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου.	ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου. εὐλογημένη ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυίδ.	ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου.	ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου, [καὶ] ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.
ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.	ὡσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.	ἐν οὐρανῷ εἰρήνη καὶ δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις.	

¹³⁴ To use Lohfink’s phrase, there is “a christological narrowing” (*eine chrsitologische Engführung*) in Matthew’s account (“Der Messiaskönig,” 193).

Immediately noticeable is that in no other account is the “Hosanna” directed *to* the son of David.¹³⁵ One might pass over this as an insignificant oddity if not for the fact that Matthew re-uses the exact phrase in 21:15, and it is this particular phrase that generates Jesus’ first confrontation with the leadership in Jerusalem.¹³⁶ Further, Matthew’s addition of τῷ υἱῷ Δαβὶδ to Mark’s ὡσαννά along with his the deletion of Mark’s blessing of the kingdom (ἡ ἐρχομένη βασιλεία) significantly impacts the hermeneutical effect of the passage; Matthew makes it entirely christological:

ὡσαννά τῷ υἱῷ Δαβὶδ·
 εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου·
 ὡσαννά ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.

Matthew’s three-part structure creates an inclusio of Hosannas with the “blessing” of the “coming one” one at the center. All of the praise is now centered directly on the coming king – he receives “Hosannas,” and he (alone) is “blessed.”¹³⁷ The second Hosanna – ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις – thus becomes in Matthew’s structuring the heavenly counterpart to the earthly praises offered to the κύριος-son of David; the heavenly host is called upon to

¹³⁵ I agree with most that “Hosanna” is used here more as a general exclamation of “praise” and less in its more ‘literal’ meaning - Save us! – which would make little sense with the dative (cf. Jacques Nieuviarts, *L’Entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem [Mt 21, 1-17]: Messianisme et Accomplissement des Écritures en Matthieu* [LD 176; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999], 96-7; cf. *Did.* 10:6: ὡσαννά τῷ θεῷ Δαβὶδ). Not only has its use as a term of praise in Matthew’s cultural encyclopedia been demonstrated (cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:124-5), but also more importantly, Matthew clearly uses the term in this manner, since (1) it stands in parallel to “blessed” (21:9) and (2) when it is re-used in 21:15, Jesus subsequently interprets it as “praise” (αἶνος, 21:16).

¹³⁶ As we will see below, the repetition suggests more is at play in Matthew’s structuring than France allows when he says, “The fact that the same praise formula is applied to the Son of David and to God is interesting in light of later christological developments, but that is probably to read too much into the instinctive exuberance of the pilgrim crowd” (*Matthew*, 781).

¹³⁷ Instructive is the oft-cited parallel with *Did.* 10:6 (Ὠσαννά τῷ θεῷ Δαβὶδ), especially considering the close connection between Matthew and the *Didache* (on which see *Matthew, James, and Didache: Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Settings* [eds. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen K. Zangenberg; SBLSymS 45; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008]).

echo and complete, as it were, the earthly praise of the lordly king.¹³⁸ Further, the centerpiece – εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου – by this point in the narrative carries a number of significant resonances. Twice already has Jesus been identified as the “coming one” (3:11; 11:3) who, though having the power to bring eschatological judgment (3:11), in fact brings the longed-for restoration promised in Isaiah (11:3-6).¹³⁹ Finally, his coming ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου echoes (1) his immediately preceding description of himself in 21:3 as “the Lord” (ὁ κύριος) of the donkeys he sovereignly appropriates for his entry, (2) the numerous addresses of him as κύριε throughout the narrative (see chpt. 5 below), and (3) the matching phrase in 23:39 that serves as an inclusio to 21:9 – the κύριος who entered the Temple departs,¹⁴⁰ not to return until he is welcomed in the same language of Ps 117:26 – εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (23:38-24:1; again, see chapter 5 below for a full discussion).

Praise to the son of David in the Temple

As the scene progresses, Matthew makes a number of changes to Mark’s narrative that once again, like those observed in Matt 21:9, shift the emphasis to an explicitly christological-liturgical one. As noted above, Matthew makes explicit the question about Jesus’ identity – τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος; – and then simply passes over the leaders’ plot to destroy Jesus on account of his actions in the Temple (Mark 11:18).¹⁴¹ Rather, Matthew

¹³⁸ As many note, ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις reflects the language of Ps 148:1-2 (LXX; cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 411), and more broadly, the call to the heavenly host to join in the praise of the κύριος (e.g., Pss [LXX] 88:6-7; 102:19-21). Cf. also Sir 43:9; *Pss. Sol.* 18:10; *Odes Sol.* 14:1.

¹³⁹ The “coming one” is, contrary to John’s expectation, “gentle (πραῦς) and humble in heart” (11:29), which Matthew reiterates in 21:5 by quoting Zech 9:9 (πραῦς καὶ ἐπιβεβηκὼς ἐπὶ ὄνον). See chapter 5 for my treatment of Matt 11-12.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Nieuvarts, *L’Entrée*, 36-7; 138-9; 211-13.

reserves the climactic controversy for what they observe next – τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν καὶ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς κρᾶζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ λέγοντας· ὥσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ.

With striking frequency, scholarly interpretation misses the heart of the controversy, giving only a vague explanation for the leaders' reaction,¹⁴² or reducing their “anger” (ἡγανάκτησαν) to pettiness about the healing, as though they were angered at the healing itself. For example, Davies and Allison comment: “Note how niggardly the rhetorical question makes the leaders appear: they even complain about the blind and lame being healed.”¹⁴³ Luz follows a similar line: “That they were angry not over the temple cleansing but over his miracles with the blind and lame underscores their malevolence.”¹⁴⁴ Or, to take one more example, Nolland suggests that it is the acclamation of Jesus as “son of David” that angers the leaders.¹⁴⁵

The comments above significantly misplace the point of controversy and overlook the dramatic christological point at hand, which, as we saw, already began with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem where he received the praise of the people. Matthew draws this passage to a close by re-invoking that same theme, now with greater intensity and pointedness – Jesus is praised in the Temple while doing θαυμάσια. The real offense for the high priests turns on their scripturally-shaped understanding of *whom* should be *praised* in the Temple, as seen in the following points.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 3:10

¹⁴² E.g., Gundry, *Matthew*, 414: “The indignation of the chief priests and scribes helps Matthew intensify the guilt of unbelieving Jews.” But *why*, exactly, they are indignant in the first place Gundry does not clarify.

¹⁴³ *Matthew*, 3:141.

¹⁴⁴ *Matthew*, 3:13; cf. also Fiedler, *Matthäusevangelium*, 326.

¹⁴⁵ *Matthew*, 847-8; also Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 602. After writing this section I encountered the recent article by Andrew Nelson (“‘Who is this?’ Narration of the Divine Identity of Jesus in Matthew 21:10-17,” *JTI* 7.2 (2013): 199-211). While finding much to agree with in Nelson's article, he too locates the scribes' and Pharisees' objections in the children's acclamation of Jesus as “son of David” (209).

First, Matthew emphasizes that all this occurred “in the Temple” (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ). He twice repeats that phrase in relation to the healings (21:14) and the praise Jesus receives (21:15), even though he has already mentioned *twice* in the immediately preceding verses that Jesus is “in the Temple” (21:12, 2x). The emphasis on the Temple suggests that the setting is an indispensable part of the controversy for Matthew’s telling.¹⁴⁶ Most importantly for the passage at hand, the Temple is the place par excellence where *Israel’s God* is “praised.” Consider, for example, the convergence of the “praise” (αἶνεσις) of the κύριος in his οἶκος for his θαυμάσια in Ps 25:6-7 (LXX):

νίψομαι ἐν ἁθύοις τὰς χεῖράς μου καὶ κυκλώσω τὸ θυσιαστήριόν σου
κύριε⁷ τοῦ ἀκοῦσαι φωνὴν αἰνέσεως καὶ διηγῆσασθαι πάντα τὰ θαυμάσιά
σου⁸ κύριε ἠγάπησα εὐπρέπειαν οἴκου σου καὶ τόπον σκηνώματος δόξης
σου

Matthew’s episode evokes precisely this linguistic pattern. It is the θαυμάσια (21:15)¹⁴⁷ of the κύριος-son of David (21:3, 9, 14), in the Temple (21:12, 13, 14, 15), which elicits what Jesus describes as “praise,” drawn directly from Israel’s liturgical tradition (αἶνος, 21:16/Ps 8:3). That liturgical-linguistic pattern is now appropriated for the κύριος-son of David.

Second, while Davies and Allison press for a Moses typology in the combination of the words θαυμάσια and ποιέω (à la Deut 34:12),¹⁴⁸ the most immediate connection in Matthew is with the acts of Israel’s κύριος: (1) the vast majority of the instances of

¹⁴⁶ Similarly, Daniel M. Gurtner, “Matthew’s Theology of the Temple and the ‘Parting of the Ways,’” in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew* (eds. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 138-9.

¹⁴⁷ θαυμάσια being a hapax legomenon in the NT.

¹⁴⁸ *Matthew*, 3:141, 143-4. They argue that Matthew’s phrase - τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν - is closer to Deut 34:12 than any other text, and therefore we should see primarily a Moses typology at work. But several OT texts use the exact phrase - τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν - for the κύριος. See, e.g., 1 Chron 16:9, 12; Ps 77:4, 12; cf. Joel 2:26.

θαυμάσια and ποιέω in the LXX refer to mighty deeds of the κύριος, and (2) this is especially so in the Psalms, which consistently pair the Lord’s θαυμάσια with the αἶνος/αἶνεσις due to him (also with αἰνετός).¹⁴⁹ Indeed, it is Israel’s liturgical tradition – Ps 8:3 (Matt 21:16) – that forms the specific hermeneutical context into which Matthew has placed Jesus’ mighty deeds. As often noted, Jesus’ citation of Ps 8:3 as defense of the praise he receives is rather ironic, since Ps 8:3 is about praise God has ordained for himself.¹⁵⁰ But this is not simply a convenient proof-text connecting catch-words; rather, the brief verse cited in 21:16 metonymically evokes the broader context:

κύριε ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν ὡς θαυμαστὸν τὸ ὄνομά σου ἐν πάσῃ τῇ γῇ . . . ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίσω αἶνον ἕνεκα τῶν ἐχθρῶν σου τοῦ καταλῦσαι ἐχθρὸν καὶ ἐκδικητήν (Ps 8:1-3, cf. vs. 10)

As we noted above, Jesus (1) refers to himself as ὁ κύριος when he prepares to enter Jerusalem (21:3), but also (2) he is welcomed as ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου (21:9), (3) proceeds to do θαυμάσια in the Temple (21:14; cf. 21:20), and (4) cites Ps 8:3 against his “enemies” (21:16; cf. 22:44).¹⁵¹ That Jesus cites *this* Scriptural text while doing *mighty deeds* (ποιέω + θαυμάσια) *in the Temple* directs the reader’s attention most immediately to Israel’s liturgical tradition – the praise of the κύριος for his rescuing power in the place uniquely set apart for that worship/praise.

None of this misses the leaders’ attention in Matthew’s account. It is what the leaders see (θαυμάσια) happening “in the Temple,” which evokes what they hear from

¹⁴⁹ Cf., e.g., Pss (LXX) 77:4, 11, 12, 32; 95:3-4; 106:31-32; 144:5; Job 37:5. Cf. also Joel 2:26-7; Sir 18:6; 36:5-6; Pr Azar 1:20; *T. Sim.* 6:7; *T. Ab.* (A) 8:6.

¹⁵⁰ E.g., France, *Matthew*, 789.

¹⁵¹ Cf. H. Klein, “Zur Wirkungsgeschichte von Ps 8,” in *Konsequente Traditionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Klaus Baltzar zum 65. Geburtstag* (eds. R. Bartelmus, T. Krüger, and H. Utzschneider; Göttingen: Freiburg, 1993), 197.

the children (ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαβὶδ), that elicits their consternation: ἀκούεις τί οὗτοι λέγουσιν; They make no objection whatsoever to the various acts of healing themselves.¹⁵² Neither is their objection directed explicitly to the acclamation of Jesus as “son of David.” Rather, their anger results from the christologically-centered *praise* Jesus’ θαυμάσια elicit, made plain from Jesus’ response. He neither defends his miracles nor the address of him as son of David, but rather the *praise* offered to him: οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ὅτι ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίσω αἶνον; (21:16/Ps 8:3).¹⁵³

Despite the progression of the passage laid out above, interpreters consistently overlook the liturgical-christological contours of the text, vaguely relating the quotation of Ps 8:3 with the praise of “God.”¹⁵⁴ But this misses the heart of the controversy as Matthew has structured it, marginalizes the actual import of the OT allusions in the passage, and fails to take into account the larger concerns of Matthew’s narrative christology. Once again, Matthew shows the wise and intelligent confounded, while the

¹⁵² It is doubtful that whether they are angry about the blind and lame being in the Temple in the first place. Lev 21:18 only forbids the blind and lame from performing priestly duties. Further, it is not clear that David’s dictum in 2 Sam 5:8 was practiced.

¹⁵³ Dunn is remiss in overlooking this passage in Matthew when he says, “The only clear New Testament examples of hymns sung to Christ are the shouts of praise in the book of Revelation” (James D. G. Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus? The New Testament Evidence* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010], 42). This is especially so if, as many argue, the language of Matt 21:9/15-16 reflects early Christian liturgical praxis.

¹⁵⁴ E.g., Nolland misses the point almost entirely when he says, “The ‘Hosanna to the son of David’ of the children is their recognition and affirmation of what *God* is doing and is thus fitting praise for *God*” (*Matthew*, 848; emphasis added). But this is exactly the point of contention – the praise is *not* being directed to God, but to the son of David. Thus the leaders’ consternation. Similar to Nolland, see also Luz, *Matthew*, 3:14; Boris Repschinski, “Re-Imagining the Presence of God: The Temple and the Messiah in the Gospel of Matthew,” *ABR* 54 (2006): 42; Dunn, *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* 20.

Father reveals his Son to “children” (cf. 11:25-27).¹⁵⁵ The αἶνος that belongs to the paternal κύριος, Matthew argues, also belongs to his Son.¹⁵⁶

Excursus 1.2 “Blaspheming” the Son

We note very briefly here one other intriguing linguistic pattern that may further suggest Matthew’s christological appropriation of Israel’s cultic language. When read within the linguistic patterns we have been tracing in the first Gospel, Matthew’s use of the verb βλασφημέω takes on interesting significance.

The verb “blaspheme” (βλασφημέω; also βλασφημία, βλάσφημος) can, of course, be used for figures other than Israel’s God in early Jewish and Christian literature.¹⁵⁷ All of the occurrences in the LXX, however, refer to “blasphemy” against God.¹⁵⁸ Matthew, too, may reflect closely this Septuagintal pattern – he uses the βλασφημ* word group seven times, with reference to three figures: God the Father, the Spirit, and Jesus.¹⁵⁹ Particularly intriguing is Matthew’s use of the term toward the end of the narrative:

¹⁵⁵ Similarly, note the many connections between 21:10-17 and 2:1-12. Once again, Jerusalem does not welcome its king; those whom one would not expect to recognize him do.

¹⁵⁶ Davies and Allison argue for a Moses-typology with Jesus’ citation of Ps 8:3, because in various traditions Ps 8:3 is connected with Exodus 15: “Matthew . . . inserted into his story of Jesus a motif . . . that recognizably belonged to another story, the story of Moses. Given, then, Matthew’s fondness for drawing parallels between Moses and Jesus and the exodus and the Christ event, this fact should colour our interpretation of 21:12-17” (*Matthew*, 3:142). But is Moses the object of praise in Exod 15 or Ps 8:3? Are there any other verbal connections with Exod 15 in Matt 21:14-16? If anything, a connection with Exod 15 should suggest a “YHWH-typology,” since Jesus is the object of praise in Matt 21:15-16 (cf. Wis 10:20-21).

¹⁵⁷ E.g., Acts 6:11; Jude 8-10; Jos., *J.W.*, 2:145.

¹⁵⁸ 2 Kgs 19:4, 6, 22; Isa 52:5; 66:3; Ezek 35:12; Dan 3:29; Bel 1:8 (against Bel); 1 Macc 2:6; 2 Macc 8:4; 9:28; 10:4, 34-6; 12:14; Tob 1:18; Wis 1:6.

¹⁵⁹ Against God: 9:3; 15:19 (though with possible wider reference); 26:65 (2x); Against the Spirit: 12:31 (2x); Against Jesus: 27:39.

<p>Matt 26:65</p> <p>τότε ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς διέρρηξεν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ λέγων· <u>ἐβλασφήμησεν</u>· τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων; ἴδε νῦν ἠκούσατε τὴν <u>βλασφημίαν</u>·</p>	<p>Mark 14:63-4</p> <p>ὁ δὲ ἀρχιερεὺς διαρρήξας τοὺς χιτῶνας αὐτοῦ λέγει· τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων; ⁶⁴ ἠκούσατε τῆς <u>βλασφημίας</u>· τί ὑμῖν φαίνεται; οἱ δὲ πάντες κατέκριναν αὐτὸν ἔνοχον εἶναι θανάτου.</p>
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In this short text recounting the high priest’s response, Matthew has doubled Mark’s “blasphemy” language. The “blasphemy” of the “Christ, the Son of the Living” God is here doubly emphasized for his claim to share the Father’s throne in the language of Daniel 7 and Ps 110.¹⁶⁰

With Matthew’s emphasis on the “blasphemy” of the “Christ, the Son of the Living God” at the trial in mind, its christological recurrence at the crucifixion takes on greater significance:

<p>Matt 27:39-43</p> <p>Οἱ δὲ παραπορευόμενοι <u>ἐβλασφήμουν</u> αὐτὸν κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν ⁴⁰ καὶ λέγοντες· ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις οἰκοδομῶν, σῶσον σεαυτόν, <u>εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ</u>, [καὶ] <u>κατάβηθι ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ</u>. ⁴¹ ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἔλεγον· ⁴² ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι· βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ ἐστίν, καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ καὶ πιστεύσομεν ἐπ’ αὐτόν. ⁴³ πέποιθεν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ῥυσάσθω νῦν εἰ θέλει αὐτόν· <u>εἶπεν γὰρ ὅτι θεοῦ εἰμι υἱός</u>.</p>	<p>Mark 15:29-30</p> <p>Καὶ οἱ παραπορευόμενοι <u>ἐβλασφήμουν</u> αὐτὸν κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ λέγοντες· οὐὰ ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ οἰκοδομῶν ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις, ³⁰ σῶσον σεαυτὸν καταβὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ. ³¹ ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες πρὸς ἀλλήλους μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων ἔλεγον· ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι· ³² ὁ χριστὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμεν.</p>
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¹⁶⁰ See the discussion of Ps 110 in chapter 5. Note also that Jesus’ reference to himself as “the Son of Man” in 26:64 evokes both the exalted setting of Dan 7 as well as Peter’s earlier confession where “the Son of Man” is equated with “the Son of the Living God” (16:13-17).

Matthew here takes over what is probably already a moment of christological irony in Mark – the “blasphemer,” who in fact saves others, is now himself “blasphemed.”¹⁶¹ Matthew’s appropriation of Mark, along with a number of his own additions, intensifies these themes in several ways: (1) Jesus is now “blasphemed” explicitly as “the Son of God”; twice Matthew adds filial language (vv 40, 43), the effect of which – especially in the mouths of the leaders – is to reinvokethe trial scene where the language of “Son of God” and “blasphemy” come into close contact; (2) the “Temple” language, as in Mark, likewise reinvokes the trial scene (26:61). But the Temple theme gains further resonance in Matthew’s narrative, where the Temple Jesus “is destroying” is indeed obsolete; he is the Son who is greater than the Temple (12:6), in whose Presence no physical Temple is needed;¹⁶² (3) the entire phrase “save yourself, if you are the Son of God,” also makes intratextual contact with numerous earlier points in the narrative. As we noted in chapter 2, the irony is that Jesus is the Emmanuel and Son who in fact saves *others* (1:21, 23; 14:30), climactically so in his full obedience to the Father’s will, by *not* coming down from the cross (26:39, 41; cf. 4:1-11; 20:28).

The irony for the reader is thick. Matthew writes the crucifixion account in a way that loudly echoes many points in the narrative, particularly the trial and its focus on Jesus’ identity as “Christ/Son” and the (reiterated) conviction for “blasphemy.” Those who fail to recognize the Son accuse him of blaspheming God; at the crucifixion, they themselves become the blasphemers of God’s Son.

¹⁶¹ See my “In the Glory of His Father: Intertextuality and the Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of Mark,” *JTI* 7.2 (2013): 231.

¹⁶² See the discussion in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

The Father and the Son

Introduction

The unique revelatory moment that 14:22-33 constitutes for the Matthean narrative has directed our attention toward the indissoluble link between Matthew's προσκυνέω language and Jesus' divine-filial identity.¹ The worship the Son receives as Lord of wind and wave creates a *Verbindung* between him and the Father, the Lord of heaven and earth who alone receives Israel's worship (4:10; 11:25). If our claims for 14:22-33 above are moving in the right direction, and if 14:22-33 is as definitive for Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as we suspect, then we would expect the rest of the narrative to reflect a similar trajectory – a trajectory that (re)narrates the identity of Israel's God around the Father-Son relation. Such a trajectory is precisely what we find in Matthew's Gospel. While it has long been noted that the importance of Jesus' unique divine-filial identity is axiomatic in Matthew's Gospel, much less often explored is how Jesus' divine-filial identity reshapes the identity of Israel's κύριος.²

¹ I use "divine-filial" as shorthand for Jesus' identity as "Son of God." I do not intend for "divine" to be taken in abstraction from the narrative.

² Much debate has occurred about whether "Son of God" is Matthew's "central" or most important title for Jesus. See, for example, the following essays: David Hill, "Son and Servant: An Essay on Matthean Christology," *JSNT* 6 (1980): 2-16 (this essay is a response to J. D. Kingsbury's claims that Matthew's is primarily a "Son of God" Christology, in *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* [Philadelphia: Fortress, Press, 1975]); J. D. Kingsbury, "The Figure of Jesus in Matthew's Story: A Literary-Critical Probe," *JSNT* 21 (1984): 3-36; David Hill, "The Figure of Jesus in Matthew's Story: A Response to Professor Kingsbury's Literary-Critical Probe," *JSNT* 21 (1984): 37-52; J. D. Kingsbury, "The Figure of Jesus in Matthew's Story: A Rejoinder to David Hill," *JSNT* 25 (1985): 61-82. Though these essays are roughly thirty years old at this point, the discussion continues. I can only make a few brief comments vis-à-vis this ongoing discussion. First, as is commonly recognized in current scholarly literature, the study of christological titles abstracted from the narrative that gives them content will do little to tell us what *Matthew* is saying about Jesus through those titles. Further, finding a "central/most important" title divides what Matthew's narrative unifies, namely, the identity of the Christ, the Son of God, the son of David, etc. However, I would also argue that some scholars have taken these correctives to "titular" christology too far.

We will proceed in a threefold manner. First, we will give a close reading of 22:41-46, the pericope about David's "Lord," because this pericope epitomizes one of the most important christological motifs relevant to our argument, namely, the relationship between the Father, the Son, and their identity as κύριος. Since 22:41-46 encapsulates several of the most important christological themes that occur together throughout the narrative, a proper reading of this passage will necessarily require a detailed consideration of a number of passages in both the broader and more immediate context of 22:41-46. We will see that, much like 14:22-33, Matt 22:41-46 and the passages related to it serve as decisive christological junctures in the Gospel, points at which the readers'

For example, Davies and Allison, in (rightly) making the point that Jesus' identity is rendered by the narrative, not by titles as such, say, "We also have difficulty with the attempt to rank titles according to their importance or significance If one thinks that what God himself calls Jesus should be determinative, then 'Son (of God)' is most important (cf. 3:17; 17:5). But if it is what Jesus most often calls himself, then we must nominate 'the Son of man.' And if it is what the narrator's voice most often uses then the answer is '(the) Christ'. . . . There are so many titles [for Jesus in Matthew] because each one supplements and qualifies the others – and also because each title in itself is inadequate: Jesus is larger than all of them" (W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* [3 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988-97], 3:720; though see their comments in 1:339-40, which suggest the totalizing role of "Son of God" in Matthew). While (again, rightly) arguing for the full narrative-shape of Jesus' identity, such a statement actually fails to account for the nuanced literary contours of Matthew's christology and thus the way the narrative itself "privileges" certain ways of identifying Jesus. For example, Jesus does indeed refer to himself most often as "son of man," but that self-reference serves as much to conceal his identity as to reveal it (see below). When he does refer to himself in an "unhidden" manner, he is in perfect harmony with the Father's identification of him, i.e., he is the "Son (of God)" (11:27; cf. 16:13-16, where the "son of man" is "the Christ, the Son of the living God"). Second, at what are manifestly key revelatory moments in the narrative, Jesus is referred to as "(the) Son (of God)," sometimes preceded by "the Christ" (see the chart in chpt. 4, p. 214; on the relation of "Christ" to "Son of God," see below). Matthew's narrative privileges, that is, divine-filial language as that which reveals something about Jesus that no other "title" can do, and as that which can only be perceived by one who follows Jesus in discipleship and is blessed by the Father (again, e.g., 11:27; 14:33; 16:16; 17:5, etc.). Yet, we would insist with others (e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:720-21) that "Son of God" in Matthew is multi-layered and requires the whole story's "filling out," and, as importantly, it in no way denigrates or marginalizes his identity as son of David, (Daniel's) Son of Man, Isaiah's servant, etc. As I began to argue in my discussion of 14:33, Matthew's "Son of God" language – in one of its facets – serves a crucial Christo-theological role in the narrative; it is the means by which Matthew articulates christologically the identity of Israel's κύριος even while remaining faithful to Israel's basic confession of the one God.

comprehension of Jesus' identity as "Son of God" and "Lord" is dramatically expanded in *theologically* significant ways.

Second, we will turn to the relation between Matthew's Emmanuel motif and Jesus' divine-filial identity, which we will show is closely bound up with our foregoing argument. Finally, from the discussion of Matthew's Emmanuel motif, we will address several long-standing and controversial questions about Matthew's christology, namely, the question of "incarnation" in Matthew and Matthew's so-called Wisdom christology.

Part I: Matt 22:41-46 – The Divine-Filial κύριος: David's son and David's Lord

I.1 The Son who is Lord

We turn first to 22:41-46 because, much like 14:22-33, it both draws together a number of prominent christological strands that run through Matthew's narrative and raises the question of Jesus' identity in a way that, we will argue, pressures the reader to articulate the identity of Israel's God in a "discernible correlation of theo- and christo-centricity" (*feststellbare Korrelation von Theo- und Christozentrik*).³ Further, it plays a formative role not only in this section of the Gospel, but in the entire narrative. As Frankemölle puts it, "[L]iegt hier in der Tat 'eine Art Resümee' der mt Christologie."⁴ Indeed, Günther Bornkamm argued some time ago that Jesus' quotation of Ps 110:1 in 22:41-46 served as the very foundation for Matthew's use of κύριος as "a divine Name of

³ Hubert Frankemölle, *Matthäus Kommentar* (2 vols; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994), 2:358.

⁴ *Matthäus*, 2:357.

Majesty” for Jesus throughout the Gospel.⁵ Though Bornkamm’s point has been contested,⁶ few would challenge that this passage serves as a critical link in Matthew’s presentation of Jesus.⁷

The passage is all the more relevant to our current discussion because, as is widely acknowledged, the logic of the riddle Jesus poses to the Pharisees turns on the readers’ narratively-shaped knowledge of his divine-filial identity. Here, on Jesus’ own lips, is a question about the Messiah that has been asked by various characters in various ways throughout the narrative about *him*: τίνας υἱός ἐστιν; (22:42; cf. 8:27; 11:3; 13:55; 21:10).

We will proceed as follows. First, we will begin by summarizing the scholarly consensus that has grown up around a number of the key points in this frequently-discussed passage, which will afford us the opportunity to offer several further observations. Second, we will examine the oft-neglected – but no less important – way this passage interacts on a literary-christological level with the context in which Matthew has placed it. It is this latter area that has not received sufficient scholarly attention and which will occupy the bulk of our discussion. We will see that our results resonate deeply with our argument above about Matthew’s christological reshaping of Israel’s worship. That is, Matthew has re-interpreted Israel’s confession of the one God to include his Son.

⁵ “End Expectation and Church in Matthew,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (trans. Percy Scott; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963), 42-3.

⁶ E.g., Christopher Tuckett, *Christology and the New Testament: Jesus and His Earliest Followers* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 123-4.

⁷ Cf., e.g., Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 446-7.

Turning to 22:41-6, we can readily see that it serves as the climax of Jesus' polemical interactions with the Jewish leadership after his "triumphal" entry into Jerusalem.⁸ After being questioned three separate times by various Jewish leaders (22:15-40), all of which Jesus turns to his favor, in 22:41-6 he takes the offensive and questions *them*. The result is that they are silenced for the final time (v. 46; cf. 22:34), and Jesus then turns to his litany of woes against the Pharisees (chpt 23).⁹ While we will discuss the literary context in further detail below, we turn now to the passage itself.

Matthew has made a number of well-documented changes to Mark that constitute a subtle but telling shift in the account. First, he has transformed what was a monologue into a dialogue,¹⁰ or more specifically, a "debate" (*Streitgespräch*).¹¹ Second, in Matthew Jesus asks two questions (not one): τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ; τίνος υἱός ἐστιν; (22:42). Instead of answering it himself (Mark 12:36), the Pharisees answer: λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· τοῦ Δαυὶδ (22:42). The result is that, as in the preceding parables, the Pharisees "condemn" themselves,¹² with the concomitant result of demonstrating Jesus' authority, particularly around the issue of interpreting Israel's Scripture. Third, Matthew's two

⁸ As noted in the excursus in chapter 4, the question in 22:42 – τίνος υἱός ἐστιν; – mirrors the question with which Jerusalem greeted him in 21:10 (unique to Matthew) – τίς ἐστιν οὗτος; Cf. M. Gourgues, *A la Droite de Dieu: Résurrection de Jésus et Actualisation du Psaume 110:1 dans le Nouveau Testament* (EBib; Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1978), 129; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* (WBC 33B; Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 649; David R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (JSNTSup 31; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988), 99.

⁹ Notice that Matthew has placed v. 46 (Mark 12:34) after Jesus' question about the Messiah's sonship, whereas in Mark it occurs at the end of the previous pericope about the greatest commandment. In so doing, Matthew has accomplished two things. First, 22:41-46 has become the definitive and final demonstration of Jesus' superiority/authority over the Pharisees. Second, they are silenced precisely on the question of the Messiah's true identity.

¹⁰ Cf. Maarten J. J. Menken, "The Psalms in Matthew's Gospel," in *The Psalms in the New Testament* (eds. Steve Moyise & Maarten J. J. Menken; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 74.

¹¹ Reinhart Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium* (BevT 33; München: Chr. Kaiser, 1963), 121.

¹² By "condemn" here I mean that they show themselves lacking in insight, since Jesus immediately problematizes their answer (similarly: 21:31, 40-41).

questions make explicit what was already implicit in Mark – the question of the Messiah’s filial identity:

Mark 12:35, 37	Matt 22:42
35: πῶς λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς υἱὸς Δαυὶδ ἐστίν;	42: τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ; τίνας υἱὸς ἐστίν;
37: αὐτὸς Δαυὶδ λέγει αὐτὸν κύριον, καὶ πόθεν αὐτοῦ ἐστίν υἱός;	45: εἰ οὖν Δαυὶδ καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον, πῶς υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν;

Beyond making the question about paternity explicit (τίνας υἱὸς ἐστίν;),¹³ one can also note important syntactical changes between Mark 12:37 and Matt 22:45. Significantly, Matthew has shifted the predicate υἱός to the front of the clause (as in 14:33). The result is both a reiteration of the question of sonship¹⁴ as well as a close syntactical connection between the words κύριος and υἱός. The latter move highlights in particular the *lordly* identity of the Son and further problematizes the delimiting of his identity to Davidic sonship. Further confirming the close relation between κύριος and υἱός is Matthew’s change of πόθεν to πῶς, which is probably meant to clarify that Jesus is not denying the Messiah’s Davidic sonship,¹⁵ but asking, in light of Ps 110:1, “in what way”¹⁶ can the one who is “Lord” also be “son of David.”¹⁷

¹³ Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:250. We will explore this point in further detail below.

¹⁴ Cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 452.

¹⁵ Georg Strecker represents the majority opinion in saying, “Da der Evangelist ‚Davidsohn‘ durchaus als positive christologische Bezeichnung verwendet, ist von vornherein ausgeschlossen, daß er . . . den Titel abgelehnt wissen wollte (*Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Matthäus* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966], 119).

¹⁶ Cf. Walter Bauer and Frederick Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3d. ed; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 901.

¹⁷ It is difficult to know whether there is any significance in Matthew’s use of καλέω over against Mark’s λέγω. Gundry suggests that Matthew’s καλέω “emphasizes the implication of deity in κύριον” (*Matthew*,

The significance of another Matthean redactional move frequently overlooked¹⁸ becomes apparent when juxtaposing Mark’s and Matthew’s introductions to the quotation of Ps 110.1:

Mark 12:36	Matt 22:43
αὐτὸς Δαυὶδ εἶπεν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ·	λέγει αὐτοῖς· πῶς οὖν Δαυὶδ ἐν πνεύματι καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον λέγων·

Matthew’s retention of and slight changes to Mark’s mention of the “Spirit” deserves comment. First, as better recognized with the onset of narrative criticism, what Matthew retains from Mark is as important for his narrative as what he changes,¹⁹ so the mention of the Spirit constitutes an important aspect of v. 43. The importance, which we will expand on momentarily, lies in the intimate relation between the Spirit and Jesus throughout Matthew’s Gospel. Second, along with dropping the definite article and the adjective “holy,” Matthew has moved the prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι before the verb and brought it into closer relation to Δαυὶδ. The significance of these changes is confirmed by the fact that five other times in the Gospel, when the “Spirit” (i.e., the Holy Spirit) is used in a prepositional phrase, it occurs *after* the verb or participle (1:18, 20; 3:11; 4:1; 12:32; cf. 12:18, as direct object). Only in 12:28 does ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ occur before the verb, and this is clearly because the Spirit’s agency is being emphasized over

452). It may, as Gundry also argues, stress Matthew’s interest in “names and titles” (451), but how it emphasizes “deity” is not clear to me.

¹⁸ I have not found anyone who comments on this issue at length.

¹⁹ Cf., e.g., Terence Donaldson, “The Vindicated Son: A Narrative Approach to Matthew’s Christology,” in *Contours of Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2005), 103; Christopher Tuckett, *Christology and the New Testament: Jesus and his Earliest Followers* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 119 (and 107).

against the demonic agency attributed to Jesus' miracles (12:27). It is reasonable to conclude, then, that in 22:43 Matthew is drawing the Spirit's agency in David's vision into sharp focus.

How can we account for this change? As mentioned, few have done more than mention this redactional move. Gundry suggests the anarthrous phrase ἐν πνεύματι, placed immediately after David, emphasizes the "visionary state" and thus the "prophetic" character of the quotation.²⁰ Maybe so, but this interpretation has yet to take account of the narrative shape of Matthew's pneumatology. There is, in fact, no instance in Matthew where pneumatology and christology are discontinuous. Even in 10:20, where it is "the Spirit of your Father" who will speak through the persecuted disciples, they are on trial because of their testimony about *the Son* and "his name" (10:18, 22, 32-3). Thus, as in 22:43, in 10:20 the Spirit of the Father testifies about the Son (cf. also 1:18-25, 3:17; 28:19). More obviously, the Spirit's agency is underscored in the Son's begetting (1:18, 20) and is the anointing agent at the Father's initial declaration of Jesus' divine-filial identity (3:17).²¹ All of this, then, lies behind the important role of the Spirit in 22:43 and shapes the readers' hearing of the Spirit's activity in David's vision.²²

In the context of this pointed question about the Messiah's *filial* identity, Matthew has not only (1) retained Mark's mention of the Spirit, but (2) emphasized its role in

²⁰ Gundry, *Matthew*, 451.

²¹ While not making the connection with the Spirit in 1:18-25 and 22:43, Nieuviarts has highlighted several points of correspondence between the infancy narrative and 22:41-46 (Jacque Nieuviarts, *L'Entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem [Mt 21, 1-17]: Messianisme et Accomplissement des Écritures en Matthieu* [LD 176; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999], 130-32).

²² More theologically put, "The condition for the perception of the person of Christ . . . is none other than the free and creative presence of God as the Holy Spirit" (Alan J. Torrance, "Auditus Fidei: Where and How Does God Speak?" in *Reason and the Reasons of Faith* [eds. Paul J. Griffiths and Reinhard Hütter; New York: T&T Clark, 2005], 29).

David's prophetic vision and (3) added the word κύριος to the introduction of Ps 110:1's statement about the two κύριοι, thus emphasizing the Spirit's role in David's recognition of the Messiah's Lordship. The Spirit's intimate connection to the "Son" is here evoked for its testimony to his "kyriotic" identity. For Matthew, the Spirit is the bond between the Father and the Son and testifies to their mutual lordship, the point to which we now turn.²³

Coming to Jesus' quotation of Ps 110:1, Matthew has followed Mark's quotation exactly, which in turn follows the LXX closely.²⁴ The text as a whole reads:

42: τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ; τίνας υἱὸς ἐστίν; λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· τοῦ Δαυίδ.

43: λέγει αὐτοῖς· πῶς οὖν Δαυίδ ἐν πνεύματι καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον λέγων·

44: εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου· κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου;

45: εἰ οὖν Δαυίδ καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον, πῶς υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν;

For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that the accent of Matthew's question about the Messiah clearly falls on three words: υἱός, Δαυίδ, and κύριος. The word κύριος, with its fourfold repetition in Matthew, receives more emphasis than in Mark or Luke.²⁵ Further, it is flanked on either side by the question of the Messiah's sonship, underscoring the

²³ Another Matthean theme is at play here as well, viz., God's sovereignty over the revelation of the Son's identity (16:17; cf. 11:25-7). David, like the disciples, is privy to knowledge of the Messiah that the Pharisees lack. Though 16:17 specifically mentions the "Father's" revelation of the Son, the Spirit's presence at the Father's announcement in 3:17, the language of 10:20 ("the Spirit of your Father"), and the close correlation between Father, Son and Spirit in 28:19 suggests that the Spirit's revelation of the Messiah's Lordship to David in Ps 110:1 should be understood in line with this Matthean theme.

²⁴ Except for the commonly noted substitution of a line from Ps 8:7 – ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ – for the last line of Ps 110:1, ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου.

²⁵ Cf. Gourgues, *A la Droite de Dieu*, 136 (and n. 25 on the same page); Alexander Sand, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (RNT; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1986), 449.

apparent contradiction between the Pharisees' answer and the Psalm's claim – how does one account for the impropriety of a father addressing his son as “Lord”? We can further unpack the flow of the passage in several steps.

There is wide agreement that the implicit, but to the reader, obvious, answer is that the Messiah is not only the son of David, but also the Son of God.²⁶ While Hagner says that “Matthew’s readers are left to supply the answer themselves, depending on the Christology of the early church,”²⁷ it is in fact the narrative that supplies the answer repeatedly.²⁸ This is especially so in light of our examination of 14:22-33, where Jesus’ identity as the “Lord” over the sea is drawn into close relation to the disciples’ confession of him as “Son of God.” In even more proximate relation to 22:41-46 are the double parables that lead up to Jesus’ question about the Messiah’s filial identity, wherein he refers to himself as God’s Son, though presumably this is only transparent to the reader (21:33-41; 22:1-14). The narrative, that is, has provided every clue to the answer to Jesus’ question – David’s Lord is God’s Son, even while he is also David’s son through adoption by a son of David, Joseph (1:20-21).²⁹ The contrast-in-continuity between the Messiah as son of David and Son of God raises a number of important issues.

²⁶ This conclusion is so common that citing all of the literature would be tedious.

²⁷ *Matthew 14-28*, 650.

²⁸ Cf. Menken, “The Psalms in Matthew’s Gospel,” 74.

²⁹ There is a further link in the LXX between the “second” κύριος and his divine-filial identity: ἐκ γαστρὸς πρὸ ἐωσφόρου ἐξεγέννησά σε (109:3). Psalm 110:3 in the MT is notoriously difficult to translate, but the LXX makes God’s “begetting” of this enigmatic figure clear, and may in fact better represent what would have been read in the Hebrew text around Matthew’s time (cf. Helge S. Kvanvig, “The Son of Man in the Parables of Enoch,” in *Enoch and the Messiah Son of Man: Revisiting the Book of Parables* [ed. Gabriele Boccaccini; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007], 189-191). Also, see Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150* (WBC 21; Waco: Word Publishers, 1983), 81. Allen points out that Ps 109:3 likely reflects the filial language of Ps 2:7. Although it is uncertain what textual tradition of the Greek or Hebrew text Matthew may have had at his disposal, it is at least clear that by the time of Justin Martyr, he (Martyr) was using Ps 109:3 LXX to argue for the pre-existence of Christ (cf. Demetrius C. Trakatellis, *The Pre-Existence of Christ in Justin Martyr: An Exegetical Study with Reference to the Humiliation and Exaltation Christology* [Missoula:

First, this passage, especially when read within the flow of the whole narrative, allows for no simple equation between the terms Messiah, son of David, and Son of God. It is particularly telling that Matthew closes/climaxes this section of the narrative – focused as it is on the interrelated questions of Jesus’ identity and authority (e.g., 21:10, 23) – with a passage that highlights Jesus’ divine-filial identity as transcending his identity as son of David.³⁰ As the climax of 21-22 and the transition to 23, Matt 22:41-46 serves as the interpretive key both to the preceding and following episodes.³¹ Thus, it is crucial to (re)read the preceding and following material in light of Jesus’ divine-filial identity, and conversely, to discover from the context how the narrative fills out Jesus’ identity as the filial κύριος in this section, which we will do below.

Second, the contrast-in-continuity between the Messiah’s identity as son of David and Son of God renders the term “Messiah” rather empty apart from the narrative – only as the story unfolds do we discover who this Messiah is.³² This belies the common assumption, based on passages like 16:16, that “[Matthew] virtually equates messianic and filial identity.”³³ Rather, 22:41-46 (cf. 14:33) supplies the fundamental reason Matthew has expanded on Mark’s version of Peter’s earlier confession; Mark’s “you are

Scholars Press for Harvard Theological Review, 1976], 44). *Barn.* 12:9-11 draws explicitly on LXX Ps 109:1 to argue for Jesus’ identity as “Son of God” over against his identity as “Son of Man” (possibly alluding to Ps 109:3).

³⁰ Cf. Nieuviarts, *L’entrée*, 130-31. Again, note the connection with Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem; he is welcomed as son of David (21:9). By the end of his conflict with the leadership (22:41-46), he has considerably complexified that identification. In Matthew’s narrative, to confess Jesus as son of David is not yet to confess that which is constitutive of discipleship (11:25-7; 16:16-7).

³¹ Cf. David Garland: “It has long been recognized that Matthew’s transitional pericopes afford important clues for the interpretation of a discourse as a whole” (*The Intention of Matthew 23* [NovTSup LII; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979], 23).

³² Cf. Kingsbury, “The Figure of Jesus in Matthew’s Story,” 8.

³³ Marianne Meye Thompson, *The Promise of the Father: Jesus and God in the New Testament* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 112; cf. also, e.g., Samuele Bacchiocchi, “Matthew 11:28-30: Jesus’ Rest and the Sabbath,” *AUSS* 22 (1984): 295.

the Christ” (σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστός, 8:29) becomes, σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος (16:16). For Matthew, “the Christ” is sufficiently characterized only by his divine-filial identity,³⁴ the contents of which the narrative articulates.

Having considered the complexifying twist 22:41-46 puts on the Messiah’s identity, we return to discuss further Matthew’s citation of Ps 110:1 and the identification of Jesus as κύριος at the right hand of the κύριος. While in the Hebrew text the two lords are distinguished (נאם יהוה לאדני), the Matthean Jesus takes advantage of the wordplay in the Greek text, where both YHWH and the “Messiah” appear as κύριος. Of course, κύριος has a wide semantic range and need not imply an identification between the two figures. But there are three factors, one external to the narrative, and two internal to the narrative that suggest Matthew exploits Ps 110’s double use of κύριοι to create an inextricable link between the filial and paternal κύριοι.

I.2 External Factors Related to the filial κύριος of Matt 22:41-26

First, to the external factor.³⁵ Several scholars have noted the surprising lacuna of references to Psalm 110:1 in early Jewish literature. Gourgues comments: “Une telle interprétation messianique du verset psalmique n’est attestée dans la littérature rabbinique qu’au troisiè siècle de notre ère.”³⁶ Hengel and Bauckham follow with a similar attestation, and posit an explanation for this lacuna. Both are worth hearing at length.

Hengel states:

³⁴ Cf. Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (TVG; Wuppertal: R. Brockhaus, 1984 [1922]), 649.

³⁵ Here I draw on my recent article, “In the Glory of His Father: Intertextuality and the Apocalyptic Son of Man in the Gospel of Mark,” *JTI* 7.2 (2013): 213-232.

³⁶ *A la Droite de Dieu*, 132; cf. also David M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity* (SBLMS 18; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), 28.

...the *Similitudes of Ethiopic Enoch* [are] dependent upon Ps.110. Other than this text, we have no unambiguous witness from pre-Christian times....*It was the enormity [Ungeheuerlichkeit] of the claim of a real mutual participation on the throne with God*, which was responsible for the fact that Ps.110.1 had only limited impact upon the content of the preserved Jewish apocalyptic texts from Hellenistic-Roman times (emphasis mine).³⁷

Similarly, Bauckham attests that:

There is no convincing case of allusion to Psalm 110.1 (or to any other part of the psalm) in Second Temple Jewish literature, apart from the Testament of Job, where it [sic] used quite differently. This does not prove that Psalm 110 was not read messianically in pre-Christian Judaism....but the absence of allusion shows that it was of no importance in Second Temple Jewish thinking....The explanation of its role in early Christology, contrasted with its absence from Second Temple Jewish literature, is that for early Christians *it said about Jesus what no other Jews had wished to say about the Messiah or any other figure: that he had been exalted by God to participate now in the cosmic sovereignty unique to the divine identity* (emphasis mine).³⁸

Luther, in his typically more provocative manner, said it this way:

‘Sit,’ says God to him, not at my feet, not over my head, but next to me, as high as I sit sitting next to God, what else is that than being also God? For God is so jealous for his honor that as He said himself, Isa 42.8, he will give it to no other And yet here, says the Psalmist, sits one who is like Him. From this it follows that he must be God.³⁹

³⁷ Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 179. Bauckham contends that there is no allusion to Psalm 110:1 in 1 Enoch (“The Throne of God,” 57-60); cf. also Charles Gieschen, *Angelmorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 85-88.

³⁸ Bauckham, “The Throne of God,” 174-5; cf. Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 718. Some claim an allusion to Ps 110 in 11QMelch. This has been rightly challenged by several scholars. Of course, the text is only fragmentary, so a definitive conclusion cannot be reached. cf. Hengel, *Studies*, 184; H. Anderson, “The Jewish Antecedents of the Christology in Hebrews,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Christianity* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 531-2. On the so-called “Self-Glorification Hymn” (4Q491) and the recently found “Vision/Revelation of Gabriel,” both of which *may* have some (?) relationship to Ps 110, see Collins, *The Scepter and the Star* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2010), 149-164.

³⁹ Cited in Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Churchbook: Matthew 13-28* (Vol. 2 of *Matthew: A Commentary*; rev. & exp. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 424.

While Luther's conclusion that "he must be God" is overly hasty, he nonetheless perceived something close to the heart of what Hengel and Bauckham have articulated in light of Second Temple literature – the exaltation of a figure to God's right hand that would appear to infringe on his unique sovereignty. Further, when one comes to Matt 22:44, the "enormity" of the claim of Ps 110:1 is heightened with the redundant use of the appellation κύριος in the LXX, such that now the Messiah is not only exalted to the Father's throne, but is addressed with the same appellation, in the same sentence, within this exalted context.⁴⁰ The "enormity" of the claim, however, is even more poignant when read within the context of Matthew's story about the filial κύριος.

It is, then, Matthew's narrative that best shapes our sensibilities to his use of Ps 110:1 here in 22:42-46. Both the narrative as a whole and the more immediate context of 22:41-46 shed light on how we should understand the identity of the filial κύριος of Ps 110:1. First, we turn to the narrative as a whole.

I.3 Broader Narrative Context for the filial κύριος of Matt 22:41-46

Surveying Matthew's every use of κύριος for Jesus would take us too far afield. It will suffice to consider briefly three passages that highlight the consistent way the narrative draws together Jesus' identity as "Son of God" and "Lord" not only to demonstrate the Son's lordship in general, but in fact to create an identity between the filial and paternal κύριοι.⁴¹ The linguistic patterns we will observe are what provide the

⁴⁰ Hay notes that, "Whereas early Christian quotations of the verse represent both God and the one addressed with the common title *kyrios*, it seems certain that originally the OG did not translate the divine name as *kyrios* but retained the tetragrammaton in Hebrew or Greek letters instead" (*Glory at the Right Hand*, 21). Whether or not it is "certain," the more pertinent observation is that in *Matthew's narrative* the two are addressed with the same term.

reader with the proper repertoire for interpreting 22:41-46 when she finally arrives at that climactic passage.

I.3.1 Matt 3:1-17 – Isaiah’s κύριος and the Beloved Son

As with the other synoptic gospels, Matthew uses Isa 40:3 to introduce John the Baptist’s prophetic ministry, which portends the coming of Israel’s κύριος to redeem and deliver his people from exile (Matt 3:3).⁴² As is commonly recognized, and again as in all three synoptics, Matthew identifies Isaiah’s coming κύριος as Jesus.⁴³ However, while the second-time reader makes this connection more readily, too quick of an identification of the κύριος of 3:3 with Jesus occludes the surprising literary-christological effect of Jesus’ initial appearance in this scene, which does not occur until 3:13.

In 3:1-3, John announces what appears to be the advent of Israel’s God. Matthew (1) portrays John as the herald of the coming Lord in the words of Isaiah, (2) describes

⁴¹ Some time ago J. D. Kingsbury argued that κύριος in Matthew basically functions as a supplementary title in inasmuch as it lends “divine authority” (following Bornkamm) to the more “primary” titles for Jesus in Matthew, such as Christ, son of David, and Son of God (“The Title ‘Kyrios’ in Matthew’s Gospel,” *JBL* 94 [1975]: 246-255). While having some affinity with Kingsbury, my argument moves in a slightly different direction by treating the use of κύριος for Jesus as more than “supplementary” and by tying it more closely with the identity of the Father as κύριος.

⁴² For Matthew, it is the messianic “Lord” who ends the exile (1:17, 21). Like Luke, Matthew splits Mark’s conflation of Isa 40:3, Mal 3:1 and Exod 23:20, using the Mal 3 and Exod 23 passages for his later, further explication of John’s and Jesus’ identities in 11:10. See more below.

⁴³ E.g., Joachim Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (2 vols.; Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 1:67; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:293; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew* [3 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress], 1:135; Pierre Bonnard, *L’Évangile selon Saint Matthieu* (Geneve: Labor et Fides, 1992), 33. On the application of κύριος to Jesus in early Christianity, cf. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S. J., “The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios*-Title,” in *The Semitic Background of the New Testament: Volume II: A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), 115-142. Also commonly noted is the eschatological interpretation of Isa 40:3 at Qumran (e.g., 1QS VIII, 13ff), but as Gnilka notes, “[D]ie Stelle wird hier weder messianisch gedeutet noch mit Gesamtisrael in Verbindung gebracht” (*Matthäusevangelium*, 1:67), and as Bonnard continues, “Dans la Règle essénienne de Qumrân, le même text d’Esaïe est cite, mais dans un tout autre sens . . . [L]es saints de Qumrân faisaient retour à la Loi pour préparer la révélation définitive de Dieu” (*Matthieu*, 33).

him in terms evocative of Elijah, who was to precede the Lord's coming (Mal 3:1-2; 4:5-6),⁴⁴ then (3) shows him denouncing the Pharisees, claiming that, ὁ θεὸς ἐκ τῶν λίθων τούτων ἐγεῖραι τέκνα τῷ Ἀβραάμ (3:9), and, ἤδη δὲ ἡ ἀξίνη πρὸς τὴν ρίζαν τῶν δένδρων κεῖται· πᾶν οὖν δένδρον μὴ ποιοῦν καρπὸν καλὸν ἐκκόπτεται καὶ εἰς πῦρ βάλλεται (3:10).⁴⁵ Long ago, Irenaeus rightly read this image, and the one that follows in 3:11-12, as an allusion to Mal 4:1 (3:19, LXX).⁴⁶

Isaiah and Malachi come together, therefore, in prophetic intertextual harmony to announce that the κύριος they portended is, naturally enough, identified with Israel's God. He is the referent of Isa 40:3, and he is the one who, in Malachi, will execute judgment (and mercy, 4:2) on his people. Further, on a narrative level, the only one referred to as κύριος thus far has been Israel's God (6x in chpts 1-2). Next, John goes on to speak of "the coming one" (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) in 3:11, who effects the judgment portended in 3:10 (cf. 3:12). The description of "the coming one" closely parallels the description of "God" (ὁ θεός) in 3:8-10.⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the narrative hints that the "coming one" is distinct from "God" – ἰσχυρότερός μου ἐστίν, οὗ οὐκ εἰμι ἰκανὸς τὰ ὑποδήματα βαστάσαι – but his identity remains momentarily enigmatic.⁴⁸

Apart from that hint, however, there is no mention of Jesus at all in John's preaching in these first 12 verses. Isaiah's Lord (3:3), the "God" who will raise up children and judge others (3:9), and the "coming one" who "gathers *his* wheat" (3:12)

⁴⁴ On whether Elijah was expected to precede the Messiah in early Jewish thought, see n. 63 below.

⁴⁵ The term ἐκκόπτεται is, rightly, most frequently taken as a "divine passive." Cf., e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:309; Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:69-70.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Haer.*, 4.4.3. Irenaeus' intertextual judgment has been vindicated repeatedly by modern scholars.

⁴⁷ E.g., (1) the "coming" of God/the Lord and the "coming one"; (2) repentance (3:8, 11); (3) God's people in 3:8 are "*his* [the coming one's] wheat" in 3:11; (4) threat of "cutting down" (3:10) and "clearing *his* [the coming one's] threshing floor" (3:12); (5) both burn with "fire" (3:10, 12).

⁴⁸ Wearing sandals presumes a human being.

sound very much like the same person – Israel’s God. The most recent mention of Jesus, in fact, shows him still a young child having moved to Nazareth (2:23). While the reader may naturally anticipate that the “coming one” is Jesus, the lengthy gapping of any explicit mention of him and the initial focus on the eschatological actions of Israel’s κύριος/θεός functions literarily (1) to build anticipation about the one who will fulfill what John portends, and (2) to create an unbroken bond between the one who fulfills and Israel’s θεός.

And so 3:13 (re)introduces a second figure alongside Israel’s God, namely, Jesus. The story leaves no doubt that he is “the coming stronger one” 3:11-12, based on John’s deference to him and insistence on receiving *his* baptism (3:14; cf. 3:11). Matt 3:13 thereby effects a “hermeneutic” reading of Matthew’s earlier words; the Lord of 3:3, the “coming one” of 3:11, is not, to be precise, “God,” but rather, “Jesus.” Yet, John’s intervening declaration of what God, Isaiah’s “original” Lord, will do (3:9-10), precludes a “hard” conceptual division between the identity and action of God and κύριος Jesus, even while the two are clearly distinct. The theological-christological elision evidenced in the baptism narrative extends that which is already present in the birth narrative; for Jesus to save *his* people (1:21) is to save the Father’s people (2:6); he is μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός. Put otherwise, the linguistic pattern in the baptism narrative – continued from the birth narrative – further solidifies the *Verbindung* between the identity and activity of “God” and “Jesus.” This *Verbindung* is tied to the climax of this scene, where “God” (3:8-10) and the “Lord/coming one” (3:3, 11) are further defined – they are Father and Son (3:17).

The voice of the Father at the end of this scene serves as an inclusio with his voice through Isaiah at the beginning:

<p>Matt 3:3</p> <p><u>φωνὴ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ· ἐτοιμάσατε τὴν ὁδὸν κυρίου . . .</u></p>	<p>Matt 3:17</p> <p><u>φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν λέγουσα· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου . . .</u></p>
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The paternal κύριος (cf. 1:22; 2:15), once again taking up the voice of the prophets, speaks of his coming as the coming of “my Son,” who shares his identity as κύριος; he is the filial κύριος.⁴⁹ The upshot is that the movement of this passage ties the Father and Son together around their identity as κύριος. Isaiah’s and Malachi’s Lord, Israel’s God, is present as the human being – Ἰησοῦς, ὁ υἱός, ὁ ἐρχόμενος – who will gather his *and* the Father’s people in redemption and judgment.⁵⁰

I.3.2 Matt 11:1-27 – The Christ: The Prophets’ Lord; The Father’s Son

Further confirmation of the narrative’s interweaving of Father-κύριος-Son language occurs in a group of texts tightly connected to the one just discussed. At 11:1-3 John the Baptist reappears for the first time and asks a question that turns on his initial identification of Jesus as the “coming one”:⁵¹

3:11: ὁ δὲ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἰσχυρότερός μου ἐστιν . . .

⁴⁹ While I have not encountered others who label 3:3 and 3:17 as an inclusio, the two passages seem to function as such for several reasons: (1) the repetition of the word φωνή + prepositional phrase + participle of speaking; (2) the identification of Jesus as κύριος and υἱός (which are repeatedly joined in the narrative, e.g., 22:41-46); (3) the two passages create a dual scriptural attestation to Jesus’ identity, the first from Isa 40:3 and the second from the commonly recognized allusions to Ps 2:7 and Isa 42:1 (and/or Gen 22:2). Those scriptural attestations fittingly open and close Jesus’ first public appearance.

⁵⁰ Note again, as in 1:21 and 2:6, in one breath Matthew can refer to the people as belonging to the Father (3:9) and in another, to the Son (3:12); cf. also 24:31 (τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς αὐτοῦ).

⁵¹ Cf. Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:103.

11:3: σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἢ ἕτερον προσδοκῶμεν;

John's question, seemingly prompted by that fact that Jesus has not actually done what John had announced (3:12), sets the trajectory for the preoccupation of the next two (maybe three) chapters – the question of Jesus' identity and vocation.⁵² Particularly relevant to our present discussion is the fact that the major points of response to this basic question of identity throughout Matt 11-12 are found on Jesus' own lips, an important point of contact with 22:41-46.⁵³ Whereas the crowd wonders whether he is the "son of David" (12:23), and the leaders attribute his power to Beelzebul (12:24) and duplicitously call him "teacher" (12:38), Jesus identifies himself as "Son" ([θεοῦ]; 11:25-7), "Lord" (12:8), and more enigmatically, one "greater than" the Temple (12:6), Jonah (12:41), or Solomon (David's son!, 12:42). Equally important, however, is once again the way Matthew has structured this section to "fill up" these self-references with christological and theological significance in a way that carries forward what we saw in 3:1-17.

Most pertinent to our discussion is the way this section of the narrative progresses and the significance of that progression for John's and Jesus' identities, which are closely connected.⁵⁴ Our intention here is not to explore each of these passages in great

⁵² Cf. B. C. Lategan, "Structural Interrelations in Matthew 11-12," *Neot* 11 (1977): 118. Celia Deutsch in fact suggests that 11:3 and 13:54 serve as opening and closing questions that illuminate the subject matter of chapters 11-13, viz., Jesus' identity (*Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11:25-30* [JSNTSup 18; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987], 24); cf. also Frank J. Matera, "The Plot of Matthew's Gospel," CBQ 49 (1987): 244.

⁵³ Further, however, 11-12 reflect a similar pattern as 21-22 in that the rejection of John (11:18; 21:23-32) necessarily leads to a misidentification/rejection of Jesus (11:19; 21:27).

⁵⁴ Cf. David Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 127.

exegetical detail, which has been done in numerous places, but to account more precisely for the way the narrative's progression renders the identity of the filial κύριος.

First, Jesus answers John with a concatenation of texts from Isaiah, widely recognized as drawing especially from Isa 29, 35, and 61:⁵⁵

καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· πορευθέντες ἀπαγγείλατε Ἰωάννῃ ὃ ἀκούετε καὶ βλέπετε· τυφλοὶ ἀναβλέπουσιν καὶ χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν, λεπροὶ καθαρίζονται καὶ κωφοὶ ἀκούουσιν, καὶ νεκροὶ ἐγείρονται καὶ πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται· (Matt 11:4-5)

The Isaianic citations not only confirm the validity of Jesus' ministry, but more importantly, on a narrative-theological level, are tied closely with John's initial announcement about the advent of Isaiah's κύριος in 3:3.⁵⁶ The texts cited by the Jesus in 11:4-5 are intertwined with the eschatological appearance of Israel's Lord.⁵⁷

Jesus, therefore, effectively answers John's question in the language of Scripture; he was not mistaken in announcing the coming of Israel's Lord. The Lord has indeed come, evidenced in "the works of the Christ" (11:2). He has come, however, in an unexpected way, not (yet) as John had announced. As a result, Jesus utters a christological makarism – καὶ μακάριός ἐστιν ὃς ἐὰν μὴ σκανδαλισθῇ ἐν ἐμοί (11:6) – the contents of which highlight three key movements in this passage. First, it solemnly confirms that John was not mistaken – Jesus is the "coming one." Second, this

⁵⁵ Cf., e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:242-3; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:134; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:105-6; Donald Verseput, *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King: A Study of the Composition of Matthew 11-12* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1986), 68-9.

⁵⁶ The Matthean Jesus further evokes 3:1-17 in his questions to the crowd about their journey to see John in the wilderness (11:7-9).

⁵⁷ Typical of Matthew, the conflation of OT texts elicits multiple levels of resonance; those texts acquire new significance in the context of the narrative in which they appear. In Matt 11:4-5, Matthew draws together texts that speak of the coming of YHWH and YHWH's "glory" (e.g., Isa 29, 35) with texts that speak of an "anointed one" (Isa 61). For Matthew, the coming of the κύριος is the coming of the anointed one, the Christ.

affirmation naturally ties into Jesus' subsequent explication of John's identity – he is the Elijah to come, which in turn reconfirms that Jesus indeed is the “coming one,” Israel's κύριος.⁵⁸ Third, it anticipates Jesus' impending pronouncement about the Father's sovereignty over the revelation of the Son (11:27) and the later parallel makarism he pronounces over Peter: μακάριος εἶ, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ, ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς (16:17).⁵⁹ When read in its Matthean context, the distinctly christological makarism at 11:6 finds its literary outworking in 11:25-7 and the rest of the narrative. The chief “blessing” to be had, Matthew stresses, is the revelation of Jesus as the divine-filial “Christ,” Isaiah's/Malachi's promised “Lord;” but that blessing comes only as the apocalyptic gift of the paternal Lord (11:25).⁶⁰

As a result, while the following scene concerns John (11:7-19), it does so primarily with a view to Matthew's larger christological emphases.⁶¹ More specifically, as in 3:1-17 and in 21:23-27, to misidentify John is to misidentify Jesus, further evidenced in Jesus' double evocation of Malachi in this passage. Jesus identifies John with the “messenger” of Mal 3:1 and again alludes to Mal 4:5 by explicitly calling John “the Elijah who is to come” (11:10, 14):⁶²

Matt 11:9-10: ἀλλὰ τί ἐξήλθατε ἰδεῖν; προφήτην; ναὶ λέγω ὑμῖν, καὶ περισσότερον προφήτου. οὗτός ἐστιν περὶ οὗ γέγραπται· ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ

⁵⁸ Note how Matthew, in typical fashion, closely connects 11:6 with 11:7 with the genitive absolute: τούτων δὲ πορευομένων.

⁵⁹ Cf. 13:57, where those who think Jesus only “the carpenter's son” as a result “are scandalized by him” (ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ), reflecting Jesus' language in 11:6, 25-7. Similarly, the Pharisees “are scandalized” (ἐσκανδαλίσθησαν) by Jesus because they are not planted by “his Father” (ὁ πατήρ μου [15:13]).

⁶⁰ Further, 11:6 follows on the heels of the relentless christological focus of 10:32-42. Fourteen times in ten verses Jesus uses “me/my” language to exhort the disciples to faithful testimony to “his name” (10:22).

⁶¹ Cf. Charles Talbert, “Matthew 11.2-24,” *Int* 64 (2010): 406.

⁶² Within Malachi itself, 4:5-6 interprets 3:1 as a prophecy about a future Elijah, and Matthew appears to read the text this way as well. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:250.

ἀποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου πρὸ προσώπου σου, ὃς κατασκευάσει τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἔμπροσθέν σου.

11:13-14: πάντες γὰρ οἱ προφῆται καὶ ὁ νόμος ἕως Ἰωάννου ἐπροφήτευσαν· καὶ εἰ θέλετε δεῖξασθαι, αὐτός ἐστιν Ἡλίας ὁ μέλλων ἔρχεσθαι.

Once again, both of these texts portend the coming of Israel's κύριος:

Mal 3:1: ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστέλλω τὸν ἄγγελόν μου καὶ ἐπιβλέψεται ὁδὸν πρὸ προσώπου μου καὶ ἐξαίφνης ἥξει εἰς τὸν ναὸν ἑαυτοῦ κύριος ὃν ὑμεῖς ζητεῖτε καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος τῆς διαθήκης ὃν ὑμεῖς θέλετε ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ

Mal. 3:22 (LXX): καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω ὑμῖν Ἡλιαν τὸν Θεσβίτην πρὶν ἔλθεῖν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ.

Several points must be noted. First, Matthew recalls his initial, Isaianic introduction of John by introducing him here in a similar way:

3:3: οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ ῥηθεὶς διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου

11:10: οὗτός ἐστιν περὶ οὗ γέγραπται

Isaiah's and Malachi's messenger are one and the same, announcing the "Lord's" coming. Using this similar introductory formula to introduce Malachi's messenger and placing it on the heels of a catena of texts from Isaiah, Matthew once again brings these two prophets into hermeneutical alignment. By doing so, Matthew re-invokes his introduction of the John/Jesus duo in chapter 3, the effect of which is to reinforce the movement we noted above: John announces the coming κύριος, the Son of the paternal κύριος. At just this point in the narrative Matt 11:7-15 reinvokes this theme from the beginning of Jesus' ministry, because now both John and Jesus have been rejected (11:6-24). Despite this rejection, Isaiah and Malachi again mutually attest to and reaffirm the

identity of the forerunner and his Lord.⁶³ Further, as in Mark, the replacement of Malachi's "before my face" (3:1) – originally referring to YHWH – with "before *your* face" (Matt 11:10; cf. Exod 23:20) turns the prophecy about Israel's Lord into a cryptic address to an unknown "you."⁶⁴ This "you" opens up a hermeneutically potent space, which Matthew fills christologically – the Father addresses his Son (cf. 11:25-7).⁶⁵

As important, however, is to hear the christological effect of these OT intertexts within Matthew's literary shaping of this section, especially when compared to Luke's use of this material. First, Matthew opens this section with a comment about "the works of the Christ" (11:2), a christological phrase absent from Luke (7:18-19).⁶⁶ His use of "the Christ" here is conspicuous, since thus far *all* of its uses have been confined to the infancy narrative (the last one being 2:4). Its reappearance at this point in the narrative is significant, because, as Verseput has shown, "Matthew has seized this story [11:1-6] as a foil to drive home the significance of all that has gone before."⁶⁷ What follows 11:2, then, epitomizes the story of Jesus thus far as "the Christ."

Second, unlike Luke, Matthew has connected this section about John the Baptist (11:7-19) with Jesus' denouncement of the cities that have rejected him and his

⁶³ Verseput too quickly concludes that with the allusions to Malachi, Matthew points to John as "the one who would prepare the way for the Messiah" (*The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King*, 85). He neglects the fact that "the expectation of Elijah as the forerunner of the messiah is not attested in Jewish texts before the rise of Christianity" (John J. Collins, "The Works of the Messiah," *DSD* 1 [1994]: 103; italics mine; cf. also Joel Marcus, *Mark 8-16* [AB 27A; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009], 644.). The result is that Verseput misses Matthew's subtle redefinition of the Messiah as Malachi's "Lord."

⁶⁴ Matthew has not followed the LXX exactly, and he was probably following Mark 1:2b or a similar tradition that conflated Exod 23:20 with Mal 3:1. Regardless, Matthew's additional comment about John's identity as Elijah (11:13-14) makes the evocation of Mal 3:1 clear – John is the Elijah who portends the "great and glorious day of the Lord." As stated in the introduction, I am not convinced about Q, the oft-cited source of Matthew's quotation here.

⁶⁵ Cf. Adolf Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: Seine Sprache, sein Ziel, seine Selbständigkeit* (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), 364.

⁶⁶ Though Luke clearly has his own christological interests: ἔπεμψεν πρὸς τὸν κύριον λέγων.

⁶⁷ *The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King*, 59-60.

subsequent *Jubelruf/Heilandsruf* (11:20-30).⁶⁸ In scholarly literature, while 11:25-30 is often read in light of the rejection motif of 11:20-24, it is rarely read explicitly in concert with Jesus' foregoing description of himself as Isaiah's and Malachi's κύριος portended by John the Baptist. But Matthew has linked 11:25-30 and 11:1-24 in several important ways. First, as mentioned, the very fact that he has placed (or retained?) this material together suggests its literary interdependence. Second, he has forged these passages around the double-themes of rejection and Jesus' identity – 11:1-24 narrates both John's doubts about Jesus and also the people's rejection of John, the latter of which necessarily entails rejecting Jesus (11:18-19). Matt 11:25-27 then provides the answer for this perplexing eventuality: only the Father knows and reveals the Son, and only the Son knows and reveals the Father. Third, Matthew has worded Jesus' response in 11:25 to serve as an inclusio with 11:4:

11:4: καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·

11:25a: Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν . . .

While the pleonastic participle ἀποκριθεὶς (+ εἶπεν) is a common construction in Matthew, it almost always occurs as a response to interlocutors or to a surprising turn of events.⁶⁹ While it has been argued that the phrase ἀποκριθεὶς + εἶπεν here is simply a

⁶⁸ In Luke, after Jesus' statement about the rejection of John and "the Son of Man" (7:33-35), we see Jesus at the house of Simon the Pharisee (7:36). The woes to the unrepentant cities and the *Jubelruf* do not occur until 10:13-22.

⁶⁹ I say almost because of the forty-three occurrences of ἀποκριθεὶς, 22:1 may be an exception (even 22:1, however, can be taken as an implicit "reply" to the leaders' desire to arrest Jesus in 21:46, especially since 22:1 includes "again" – καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς πάλιν εἶπεν ἐν παραβολαῖς αὐτοῖς λέγων – which suggests it continues the response to 21:46).

semitism meaning “said,”⁷⁰ Matt 11:25-27 succeeds a monologue-like summary of Jesus’ woes against those cities that rejected him (11:20-24), and it precedes a new address to the Father that explains this unexpected state of affairs (11:25-27). Matt 11:25, then, introduces the “answer” to the rejection of Jesus.⁷¹ Further, Matthew has shaped the progression of 11:25-30 to mirror closely the progression of 11:4-6:

11:4: Introductory formula: καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·	11:25: Introductory formula: Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν
11:5: Response to John’s doubt/potential rejection of Jesus	11:25b-27: Response to actual rejection
11:6: Christological statement that turns on “me”: καὶ μακάριός ἐστιν ὃς ἐὰν μὴ σκανδαλισθῇ ἐν ἐμοί.	11:28-30: Christological statement that repeatedly stresses “me”: πρὸς <u>με</u> , ὃν ζυγόν <u>μου</u> , μάθετε ἀπ’ <u>ἐμοῦ</u> , πρᾶύς <u>εἰμι</u> καὶ ταπεινός, ὁ γὰρ ζυγός <u>μου</u> , τὸ φορτίον <u>μου</u>

The matching introductory formulas, the themes of doubt/rejection, the parallel christological conclusions,⁷² and the fact that these passages open and close a distinct section of the narrative all betray their mutually interpretive function. Jesus’ final

⁷⁰ Davies and Allison, thinking that ἀποκριθεὶς cannot mean “answering” in 11:25 say that “it is best explained as the equivalent *wayya’an wayyō’mer*, as in 15:15; 17:14; 22:1; and 28:5” (*Matthew*, 2:273). While the phrase probably does follow this stylized construction, the Hebrew phrase nonetheless often serves as a common phrase for a *response* (e.g., Gen 31:43; 2 Sam 14:19). More importantly, the examples Davies and Allison give from Matthew to suggest it only means “said” (15:15; 17:14; 28:5) are all in fact *responses* to something someone has said or they occur as a *response* to a radical change of situation. Further, of the fifty-five total uses of a form of ἀποκρίνομαι in Matthew, all can be seen as connoting a response of some kind.

⁷¹ Note ἀποκριθεὶς is missing from Luke’s introduction to this same logion (10:21). Hagner is closer to correct than Davies and Allison when he says, “[I]n that time’ links the passage with the preceding lament concerning the unbelief of the Galileans. This may possibly explain the ἀποκριθεὶς . . . as pointing to a kind of response to that unbelief” (*Matthew 1-13*, 318; cf. also Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 167). However, the unspecific and formal “in that time” with “he answered and said,” which matches 11:4, better serves as the climax and second half of an inclusio for the whole episode (cf., e.g., Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:121).

⁷² The parallel is further reinforced in that 11:28-30 is unique to Matthew’s Gospel.

“answer” in 11:25-30 mirrors his initial response to John.⁷³ The additional “in that time” (ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ) in 11:25a contributes a sense of solemnity⁷⁴ and culmination that marks the following declaration of 11:25b-27 as the definitive response to the question of Jesus’ identity by John and his rejection by “this generation.”⁷⁵ Put otherwise, Matt 11:25 effectively introduces something of a “gnomic” response to the foregoing doubts about/rejection of Jesus; the address to his Father in 11:25-7 articulates the logic of that rejection.

I.3.3 Intermediate summary

The literary-christological significance of these observations can be stated succinctly. The interweaving of these stories further reinforces the christological undercurrent already at work from the narrative’s introduction: the works of “the Christ” (11:2) are the fulfillment of Isaiah’s and Malachi’s visions of the coming of the “Lord” (11:9-14; cf. 3:3); though rejected by many (11:16-24; cf. 2:3), he is none other than the hidden “Son” of the Father (11:25-7). The narrative presentation here of Jesus as “the Christ,” Isaiah’s/Malachi’s “Lord,” and “the Son” is manifestly in line with the opening presentation of Jesus in 3:1-17 and the climactic confrontation at 22:41-46.

⁷³ Cf. Also the related comments by Lategan, “Structural Interrelations,” 120.

⁷⁴ “...verleiht die Einführungsformel dem Wort Jesu Feierlichkeit” (Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:434).

⁷⁵ Cf. Deutsch (*Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke*, 26) for a similar conclusion.

I.3.4 Matt 11:25-30 – The Paternal κύριος and His Son

There is an added level of christological and theological depth, however, when one considers all of these observations in the context of the whole of 11:25-30 and the following pericope about the Son of Man as “Lord of the Sabbath” (12:1-8). We have already discussed 11:25-7 in some detail (see chapter 2). I commented there that it is best to read Jesus’ declaration of the Father’s Lordship over heaven and earth in parallel with Jesus’ declaration that the Father has handed over “all things” to him (11:27a) – Jesus, *as the Son*, proleptically shares his Father’s lordship. One might suppose, however, that Jesus’ address of the Father as “Lord” here necessarily differentiates Jesus’ lordship from the unique lordship of the Father. Indeed, an address to Israel’s God as “Lord of heaven and earth” characteristically articulates his unique identity in Second Temple Judaism (e.g., Ps 115:15; Isa 37:16; 44:24; Wis 11:26; Sir 43:33).⁷⁶ The content, context, and movement of this passage do in fact retain Israel’s confession of the one Lord, but that Lord, for Matthew, has a double referent.

We turn first to the address itself: *πάτερ, κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς*. Most obviously, Israel’s God here is not simply “Lord of heaven and earth,” but first, “Father.” Jewish writers, of course, frequently enough refer to Israel’s God as “Father” both in an exclusivist Jewish sense (e.g., Tob 13:14; Wis 14:2; *Jub.* 1:25; 11QT XLVIII, 8; *L.A.B.* 16:5; cf. *4 Ezra* 6:58)⁷⁷ or in a universal creational sense (e.g., *Jos., Ant., Pref.*, 4:20; Philo, *Spec.* 1:96). Luz therefore concludes, “Here Jesus speaks in the language of Jewish

⁷⁶ Cf. cf. Jonathan T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 126; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 334.

⁷⁷ By “exclusivist” I mean that the κύριος is “Father” to Israel in a unique, covenantal way, à la Exod 4:22.

prayer and makes clear how little for him the address ‘Father’ differs from the traditional language of Jewish prayer.”⁷⁸

Such a statement, however, over-generalizes and misses Matthew’s christologically-determined grammar of the word “Father.” Luz not only decontextualizes Jesus’ initial address to the “Father” in 11:25a from the statements about his unique sonship and Wisdom-like status that closely follow (11:27-30), but also from the preceding christologically-charged material in 11:1-24. It is the “Christ” (11:2), who fulfills the prophetic promises of the coming “Lord” (11:4-5), who now turns to address his “Father.” A statement like Luz’s, that is, flattens the christological significance of 11:25a by reading it in *religionsgeschichtliche* terms over against its literary framework.

Further, the narrative thus far has highlighted Jesus’ unique sonship (e.g., 3:17; 8:29) and continues to do so (as, for example, already discussed regarding 14:33). The significance of Jesus’ address to God as “Father” in 11:25a, therefore, pivots not so much on a *religionsgeschichtliche* reading of this “Father” language but on the whole narrative’s christologically particular rendering of the “Father’s” identity.⁷⁹ The identity of Israel’s God, the Lord of heaven and earth, is here articulated as the *Father of the Son*. He is not, at least here, the “Father” either in a general creational sense or even in the sense of his unique relation to Israel, but the Father of the Son with whom he shares Lordship over “all things,” even the revelation of his identity (11:27). For Matthew, to

⁷⁸ Luz, *Matthew*, 2:162; cf. also Peter Fiedler, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (TKNT 1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2006), 245. Like Luz, most commentary on 11:25 turns to discuss the Jewish background for Jesus’ address to God as “Father” (if it is discussed at all), especially whether or not it was “unique” for a Jew to address God in this intimate way.

⁷⁹ On the particularly christological shape to Matthew’s “Father” language, see below.

speak of God as “Father” is already to have spoken of the Son. This is further indicated by the cryptic way in which Jesus states his participation in the Father’s Lordship:

11:27: Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα τις ἐπιγινώσκει εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ὃ ἔαν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι.

Davies and Allison acutely observe: “As to what event or point in time might be indicated by the aorist (παρεδόθη), the text is mute. But this only enhances the atmosphere of mystery.”⁸⁰ Indeed. While I would not argue, as some have, that this text necessarily implies the pre-existence of the Son,⁸¹ the logic of the Son’s participation in the Father’s Lordship does indeed turn on the nature of their mutually-constitutive and thus mutually-revelatory relationship, not on a temporally-bound election of the Son by the Father.⁸² To say Israel’s God is “*Father*, Lord of heaven and earth” is, in light of the whole of 11:25-27, necessarily to bind his identity to the *Son who also rules and reveals with him*.⁸³ This reading is further vindicated in the very next pericope concerning the Son of Man’s lordship over the Sabbath.

⁸⁰ *Matthew*, 2:280.

⁸¹ Cf., e.g., Oscar Cullman, *The Christology of the New Testament* (2d. ed.; trans. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall; London: SCM Press, 1963), 288. Cullman, following Albert Schweitzer, suggests that the “historical” Jesus, having uttered these words, may have been conscious of his pre-existence.

⁸² The baptism fails as a candidate for the “moment” in which the Father hands over all things to his Son, as Davies and Allison note some have argued (*Matthew*, 2:280). Matthew has not created any verbal links between the baptism and 11:25-27 to suggest this to the reader, and he connects Jesus’ divine-filial identity with Jesus’ birth well before the baptism (discussed below). Further, Versepunt suggests that the Son’s “knowledge” of the Father means “to confess or acknowledge Him,” and the Father’s “knowledge” of the Son “would mean [the Son is] elected or chosen by him” (*The Rejection of the Humble Messianic King*, 142). But this reading posits a difference in *kind* between the Father’s and Son’s “knowledge” of one another that contradicts the logic and parallelism of 11:27; it posits a different meaning for Matthew’s double use of the *same* word in the *same* verse (ἐπιγινώσκω). Further, Matthew never uses ἐπιγινώσκω elsewhere to mean “chosen” (cf. 7:16, 20; 14:35; 17:12).

⁸³ Thompson says, “In this saying in Matthew regarding the mutual knowledge of Father and Son, the emphasis falls not on the metaphysical relationship of Father and Son, or even so much on the intimacy and mutuality of their knowledge, but rather on the way in which God’s hiding and revealing are effected through and in the ministry of Jesus” (*The Promise of the Father*, 112). But “God’s hiding and revealing” turns on the nature of the relationship between the Father and the Son and the mutuality of their

I.3.5 Matt 11:1-30 with 12:1-8 – The Rest-full Son and κύριος of the Sabbath

Matthew has linked 11:25-30 and 12:1-8 in several ways, only some of which commentators have broadly recognized. First, he repeats the phrase Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ in 12:1 to link this passage with 11:25. Second, having just shown Jesus offering “rest” (11:28-30), he introduces two stories about rest on the Sabbath (12:1-8, 9-14).⁸⁴ While many recognize these links, there is a surprising lack of comment on how 11:25-30 and 12:1-8 interact interpretively, especially on a literary-christological level. *That* they are related is noted, but the exegetical fruit remains largely unpicked.

There are two further points of connection between 11:25-30 and 12:1-8 that are infrequently discussed. First, Matthew has arranged 12:1-8 as a re-introduction of the

interpersonal knowledge. While Matthew is quite obviously not engaging in speculative “metaphysical” theological discourse here, he *has* re-narrated the identity of the “Lord of heaven and earth” in terms of the Father and the Son who mutually participate in ruling and revealing. Equally problematically, Deutsch, after writing of the “mutuality” of the relationship and knowledge between the Father and the Son in 11:27, goes on to say in a footnote, “This is not to imply equality, however; the phrase πάντα μοι παρεδόθη implies dependence rather than equality” (*Hidden Wisdom*, 156, n. 99). It is neither clear how this statement coheres logically with her statement about the “mutuality” implied by the Father-Son relationship articulated in 11:27, nor why “dependence” and “equality” are mutually exclusive *in this particular case*. Our argument is that the way Matthew uses the Father-Son relationship in 11:25-7 (and throughout the narrative) exploits both the dependence and equality of the Father-Son relationship as such, since Matthew is drawing precisely on that relational logic to make his point: a son receives an inheritance from his father and the two share, by the very nature of their relationship, an unparalleled and unique intimacy with one another. There is a happy overlap between Matthew’s articulation of the Father-Son relation and the later fathers’ way of speaking of the Father as the “fountainhead of divinity” even while the Son and Spirit are equal in essence to the Father (cf., e.g., Augustine, *Trin.*, 2.1.2-3 [PL 42.845-47]; 4.20.28-29 [PL 42.907-9]; 5.5.6 [PL 42.913-14]). Again, though Matthew is obviously not dealing in the lexica of “nature,” “essence,” or “divinity,” he nonetheless presses in the same direction not only with the way he uses the Father-Son imagery, but also in their mutual identity as κύριος, which we explore further below (for a brief but insightful discussion that suggests Matthew was indeed interested in “ontology,” see G. M. Styler, “Stages in Christology in the Synoptic Gospels,” *NTS* 10 [1964]: 398-409). For a penetrating discussion of the obedience of the Son to the Father as internal to the identity of the triune God, see Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (4 Vols.; trans. G. W. Bromiley; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1965-1975), IV/1, §59.1 (pp 199-210; 303-304).

⁸⁴ Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 220; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:305; Bacchiocchi, “Jesus’ Rest and the Sabbath,” 300-01.

disciples after their apparent absence,⁸⁵ whom the Pharisees accuse of breaking the Sabbath (12:1-2). The juxtaposition of this reintroduction with Matthew's special material (11:28-30) creates a literary correspondence not only *thematically* between the "rest" offered in 11:28-30 and the question about the Sabbath in 12:1-8, but also *verbally* between "discipleship" and "learning" from Jesus:

11:29: ἄρατε τὸν ζυγὸν μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ μάθετε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ

12:1-2: οἱ δὲ μαθηταί αὐτοῦ ἐπείνασαν καὶ ἤρξαντο τίλλειν στάχυν καὶ ἐσθίειν . . . ἰδοὺ οἱ μαθηταί σου ποιοῦσιν ὃ οὐκ ἔξεστιν ποιεῖν ἐν σαββάτῳ.⁸⁶

The result is a stark contrast between οἱ μαθηταί who receive Jesus' invitation in 11:29 and therefore "learn" rest from him (12:7) and the Pharisees who do *not* follow him and remain ignorant of his identity.⁸⁷

The link between Jesus' call to "learn" from him and the reintroduction of his "learners" quickly takes on an acutely christological quality, the second neglected point of contact between 11:25-30 and 12:1-8. The justification for the action of Jesus' "learners" on the Sabbath, the day of "rest," hinges on the one who invites all to come to

⁸⁵ It is unclear whether the disciples are with Jesus during chapter 11. The singular μετέβη of 11:1 suggests that Jesus is alone, while the disciples are preaching the gospel elsewhere as they were taught in chapter 10. But, since Matthew omits any mention of the disciples' actual mission, it remains unclear. It is possible he assumes the disciples have not yet begun their mission, especially because of the transparently post-resurrection nature of some of the instructions in chapter 10. Regardless, the disciples do not play any role in the events of chapter 11, and are not brought back onto the stage until 12:1.

⁸⁶ Matthew adds the repetition of οἱ μαθηταί in 12:2, emphasizing the discipleship/learning theme, while it is absent in Mark 2:24. Also, although μάθετε is from μανθάνω (not μαθητεύω, the root word behind μαθητής) there is an obvious verbal/aural/conceptual correspondence between the aorist imperative μάθετε and the noun μαθητής. Further, μανθάνω could be used for "being someone's disciple" (cf. Bauer and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 615; also Matt 9:13).

⁸⁷ Similarly, Matthew connects 12:1-8 with 11:25-30 with the language of "knowledge," which disciples possess (11:27) and the Pharisees lack (12:7).

him for “rest.”⁸⁸ It is all the more significant, then, that Matthew brings the controversy in 12:1-8 to its climax with Jesus’ claim about his lordship over the day of rest,⁸⁹ a concrete instantiation of his claim to give “rest” in 11:28:

κύριος γάρ ἐστιν τοῦ σαββάτου ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (12:8)

As is often noticed, Matthew deletes Mark 2:27: τὸ σάββατον διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐγένετο καὶ οὐχ ὁ ἄνθρωπος διὰ τὸ σάββατον. The deletion of the anthropological statement in Mark 2:27 brings the christological claim into greater relief – *this* Son of Man uniquely rules the Sabbath as κύριος. Further, Matthew replaces Mark’s ὥστε κύριος (2:28) with κύριος γάρ. The slight change stresses Jesus’ identity as κύριος even more than it already is in Mark 2:28. The result is that Jesus’ claim in 12:8 extends and illustrates the claim/invitation he has just made in 11:27-30: he is the unique Son of the Father who as such both shares Lordship with his Father and also offers eschatological rest/salvation in himself.

That Jesus speaks as the “Son of Man” in 12:8 by no means severs the relation with and connection to Jesus’ divine-filial identity in 11:27-30, since “Son of Man” in Matthew, especially when Jesus uses it with his interlocutors, often serves the role of hiding his identity from others.⁹⁰ More to the point, the Matthean Jesus later defines precisely who the “Son of Man” is in his exchange with Peter:

⁸⁸ As often suggested, the “yoke of Torah” may stand behind Jesus’ invitation to “my yoke” in 11:29. Matt 12:1-8 then illustrates the contrast between Jesus’ “self-centered” interpretation of the “yoke of Torah” and that of the Pharisees.

⁸⁹ Cf. John P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church and Morality in the First Gospel* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 84.

⁹⁰ Cf. J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 95-103. Kingsbury may have overplayed this point somewhat, but Son of Man language indeed functions to conceal at a number of points in Matthew. This is especially so in 11-12 (e.g., 11:19; 12:8, 32, 40).

16:13: τίνα λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου;

16:15: λέγει αὐτοῖς· ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι;

16:16: ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ Σίμων Πέτρος εἶπεν· σὺ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.⁹¹

Matt 16:13-16 confirms our reading above – for the reader, the κύριος of the Sabbath is the one who has just spoken of himself as Son of the Father. The reference to himself as Son of Man in 12:8 is designedly opaque to his interlocutors, as is the immediately preceding saying: λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι τοῦ ἱεροῦ μεῖζόν ἐστιν ὧδε (12:6).

We will return to 12:6 below, but we should note that just as we have seen already a number of links between 11:25-30 and 12:1-8, so also Jesus' elusive references to himself at 12:6 and 12:8 further illustrate his claim in 11:25-27 – knowledge of the Son belongs only to the Father, and that knowledge is revealed at his good pleasure (cf. 16:17). He is not revealed as the Father's Son to the Pharisees in 12:1-8, precisely because they are σοφοί and συνετοί, not νήπιοι (11:25), or in the words of 12:1 and 11:29, μαθηταί.

We return, then, to the christological significance of reading 11:25-12:8 (better, 11:1-12:8) as mutually illuminating.⁹² Failing to read these passages in light of one another breaks, or at least obscures, the unified narrative christology that we have seen in

⁹¹ Though Kingsbury does not make the connection between Son of God and Son of Man that I have made between 11:25-30 and 12:1-8, he helpfully discusses the unveiling of the Son of Man's identity at 16:13-16 (cf. *Matthew as Story*, 100).

⁹² Of course, even stopping at 12:8 is somewhat artificial, since the rest of chapter 12 is intimately linked with chapter 11. But, in the interest of space and our particular topic, we must curtail our discussion somewhere.

our study thus far.⁹³ Though there is much more to be said, we can briefly trace the literary-christological logic of this section in the following way:

1. τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Χριστοῦ (11:2) are described as:
2. The dawn of the glory of the κύριος as described by Isaiah (1:4-5), which is further reinforced by:
3. The description of John as Malachi's Elijah, who portends the coming of Israel's κύριος (11:7-15, cf. 3:3). The prophets' κύριος is, however,
4. The *Son* of the paternal κύριος (11:6, 25-27), who with the forerunner of the filial κύριος, John-Elijah, has been rejected (11:16-19, 25-27). Nonetheless,
5. The Son shares uniquely in his Father's absolute Lordship over all things (11:25, 27), because:
6. He shares a relationship of unrivaled intimacy with the Father as the Son (11:27a-c), which means that:
7. Father and Son mutually reveal one another to those outside that relationship (11:26a, 11:27d), a revelation which means:
8. Eschatological rest *in the Son* (11:28b), the prophets' κύριος whose presence ushers in the new age (cf. 11:5; 3:3), who invites all to himself in the language of Israel's God's personal Wisdom (11:28-30; language that itself further elucidates the nature of the Father-Son relation⁹⁴). This rest in and Lordship of the Son is then illustrated by:
9. The Son's defense of his disciples' "work" on the day of *rest* with a progressive christological argument that pivots on the fact that:
 - a. David and his disciples did something "unlawful" when they hungered; Jesus' disciples are therefore justified in their actions.⁹⁵

⁹³ Though see the brief but helpful comments by Hans Dieter Betz, "The Logion of the Easy Yoke and of Rest (Matt 11 28-30)," *JBL* 86 (1967): 22-23; Deutsch (*Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke*, 34, 41, 43), following Betz; M. Jack Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology, and Law in Matthew's Gospel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 107.

⁹⁴ I will comment further on Matthew's so-called "Wisdom Christology" below.

⁹⁵ We will not explore the Davidic typology present in 12:3-4. It is, however, interesting to note that Jesus invokes a Davidic-typological argument here, and later in 12:23 the people ask, "Can this be the son of David?" Yet, 12:5-8 goes well beyond Davidic typology due to Matthew's unique material (12:6), and

b. He, Jesus, is now the locus of the Father's presence on earth (12:6); such a claim not only reinforces the κύριος-Son-Wisdom themes of 11:1-30, but also connects with Matthew's larger Emmanuel motif;⁹⁶ the eschatological rest toward which the Sabbath pointed is now actualized in the Son; therefore,

c. κύριος is the Son of Man (the Son of God) over the Sabbath; this climactic claim corresponds to and elucidates the Son's claim in 11:27 to share "all" with his Father, who is likewise κύριος.⁹⁷

Before making a few summary comments, we should return briefly to the uniquely Matthean statement in 12:6 – λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι τοῦ ἱεροῦ μεῖζόν ἐστιν ὧδε – and its transformative effect on this entire section. As we noted above, much like the Son of Man saying in 12:8, Matt 12:6 is cryptically stated: "something greater" (μεῖζόν) legitimates the actions of Jesus' disciples. While on the story level the meaning may remain opaque, for the reader, it is clearly christological,⁹⁸ not least because the parallel statements that close this section are personal comparisons with Jesus in view.⁹⁹ Further, however, the reader has *just overheard* Jesus (1) declaring his hidden divine sonship that bespeaks a mutually constitutive relationship between him and his Father (11:27), and (2) issuing a call to eschatological rest in himself (11:28-30). The "something greater," hidden from the Pharisees, is, for the reader, the Father's Son. Finally, the "something

again, in 12:42 Jesus presses beyond Davidic typology, not unlike 22:41-46, by saying ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε. Chapter 12 illustrates narratively what 22:41-46 illustrates dialogically: yes, Jesus is son of David, but "son of David" is redefined around the life of the filial κύριος.

⁹⁶ Cf. David Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God's People in the First Gospel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 75-7; again, discussed further below.

⁹⁷ See Gnlika's trenchant comments about Jesus' claim over the Sabbath (*Matthäusevangelium*, 1:445-6).

⁹⁸ The judgment of most commentators. Though see France, *Matthew*, 460-61. Even France's argument supports a christological interpretation, though he says 12:6 is more about Jesus' "role" than his "person" (461). In my reading, the separation of the two seems artificial. The use of the neuter (μεῖζόν) serves, rather, much like "Son of Man" in 12.8 and elsewhere, to conceal Jesus' identity from his interlocutors.

⁹⁹ 12:41: ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Ἰωνᾶ ὧδε; 12:42: ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε.

greater” is further interpreted by what follows it: κύριος τοῦ σαββάτου (12:8). The Son, the “something greater,” is “Lord.”

While 12:6 in itself constitutes a profound christological statement, its pairing with Jesus as κύριος in 12:8 is all the more. Already Mark’s statement about the Son of Man’s Lordship over the Sabbath, which Matthew adopts, is christologically charged (2:28).¹⁰⁰ When we remember (1) the changes Matthew has made to Mark 2:28 (see above), (2) his unique addition of 12:6, and (3) his placement of this material immediately after Jesus’ address to his Father as κύριος with whom the Son shares “all things,” we are again pressured to articulate the identity of Israel’s κύριος in the idiom of 11:25-7 or 22:41-46: Father and Son together are κύριος.

Before moving on to another passage, we can briefly summarize our observations about 11:1-12:8. The christological progression through this portion of the narrative is masterfully executed. It is so not only because Matthew has woven together these themes in 11-12 in a remarkable way, but also because a glance at 3:1-17, or 14:22-33, or 22:41-46 (or just about any other portion of the Gospel) reinforces the sweeping and unified narrative christology that renders the identity of Jesus: the Christ, who is the unique Son of the Father, who as such is κύριος along with his Father, brings to fruition the eschatological salvation portended by the prophets as the return of the κύριος to his people. He *is* David’s son, but he is more than David’s son – ἰδοὺ πλεῖον Σολομῶνος ὧδε (12:42). He is ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος (16:16).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 27; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 245-6.

IV.6 Matt 14:22-33 – The filial κύριος of Creation

We make mention of one other passage, already examined at length, that further illuminates and reiterates the Son's identity as "Lord" before returning to the more immediate context of 22:41-46. In our discussion of 14:22-33 in chapter 4, we saw that the disciples' climactic confession of Jesus as Son of God is set in the context of Jesus as "Lord" over wind and wave, with numerous OT theophanic texts shaping the whole account. The resultant effect is that the reader's perception of the Son's identity is rendered both by what he does – rescuing the disciples from the chaotic waters as the "Lord," the "I am he" – and also by the worship and confession he receives from his disciples: προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ. Our purpose in recalling this passage here is only to note how Matthew's particular telling of that account fits well with the pattern we have seen thus far in 3:1-17 and 11:1-12.8. The Son's identity as "Lord" is not articulated as subordinate to or in competition with that of the Father, but the Son is in fact the filial, earthly expression of the Father's lordship: he is the filial κύριος.

Part II: The "one" God and Matt 22:41-46

II.1 The Immediate Context of 22:41-46

Having observed how Matthew articulates his theological grammar around the Father-Son-Lord language in the larger narrative, we now return to the more immediate context of 22:41-46 to gain a clearer view of how that context articulates intelligibly the identity of the filial κύριος. While all of 21-23 is relevant to the interpretation of 22:41-

46,¹⁰¹ our focus will largely remain on the immediately preceding pericope and Matthew's arrangement of the material in the following section, chapter 23. As we examine these passages, we will see that Matthew does nothing less than christologically re-articulate Israel's confession of the "one" God.

II.1.1 Matt 22:34-40 with 22:41-46 – Loving the Lord God; Loving his Son

Matthew not only retains the Markan order of these two pericopes (12:28-37a), but in fact draws them into closer hermeneutical relation by modifying the introductions to both of them so that they mirror one another:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Mark</i>
22:34-5: <u>Οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι</u> ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ἐφίμωσεν τοὺς Σαδδουκαίους <u>συνήχθησαν</u> ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, καὶ <u>ἐπηρώτησεν</u> εἰς ἕξ αὐτῶν [νομικὸς] πειράζων αὐτόν·	12:28: Καὶ προσελθὼν εἰς τῶν γραμματέων ἀκούσας αὐτῶν συζητούντων, ἰδὼν ὅτι καλῶς ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτόν·
22:41 <u>Συνηγμένων δὲ τῶν Φαρισαίων</u> <u>ἐπηρώτησεν</u> αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς	12:35: Καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἔλεγεν διδάσκων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ·

The verbal resonance between the two introductions creates an initial correspondence between the two accounts – Matthew has shaped them linguistically so as to create a mutually-interpretive pair. More importantly still, Matthew has shaped 22:34-5 and 22:41-2 together to reflect Ps 2:2:¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Cf. Gourgès, *A La Droite de Dieu*, 127-29.

¹⁰² Cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:259; Gundry, *Matthew*, 447; Warren Carter, "Love as Societal Vision and Counter-Imperial Practice in Matthew 22.34-40," in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels: The Gospel of Matthew* (LNTS 310; ed. Thomas R. Hatina; New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 36. Davies and Allison, though they consider the allusion to Ps 2:2 possible, call it "speculative" (*Matthew*, 3:239). However, the fact that Matthew has (1) altered Mark to reflect this exact phrase (συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ

Matt 22:34-35: Οἱ δὲ Φαρισαῖοι ἀκούσαντες ὅτι ἐφίμωσεν τοὺς Σαδδουκαίους συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό, καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν [νομικὸς] πειράζων αὐτόν

Ps 2:2: καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες συνήχθησαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό κατὰ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ

Matt 22:41-42: Συνηγμένων δὲ τῶν Φαρισαίων ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγων· τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ;¹⁰³

When read in concert with their OT allusion, both pericopes are deeply tied to the identity of the “Christ” and his confrontation with his “enemies,” and both must be read together. The “Christ” whom the Pharisees test in 22:34-40 turns, as it were, to “dash them to pieces” (Ps 2:9) in his questioning of *them* (Matt 22:46).¹⁰⁴ These and other changes that draw the two pericopes into closer relation are occasionally noted, but rarely are the hermeneutical implications explored. Sand says, “Die Einleitung [22:41] bei Mt ist red. und greift die Aussage von V. 34 auf; dadurch wird die Szene aufs engste mit der vorangehenden verbunden.”¹⁰⁵ Hagner likewise comments, “By connecting this pericope [22:41-46] so closely with the preceding . . . Matthew has Jesus’ question directed at the Pharisees.”¹⁰⁶ Other than to suggest Matthew has linked the passages to show the reversal in questioner/questioned, most commentators leave the connection between 22:34-40 and 22:41-46 largely unexplored. As we have seen, however, there is a deeper *christological*

αὐτό), (2) added the language of “testing,” and (3) follows the pericope with Jesus’ question about the “Christ” strongly suggests Ps 2:2 stands behind Matthew’s changes to Mark.

¹⁰³ Notice Matthew’s prepositional phrase – *περὶ τοῦ χριστοῦ* – may also reflect the language of Ps 2:2 (*κατὰ τοῦ χριστοῦ*). Compare Mark 12:35: *πῶς λέγουσιν οἱ γραμματεῖς ὅτι ὁ χριστὸς υἱὸς Δαυὶδ ἐστίν*;

¹⁰⁴ The allusion to Ps 2:2 in 22:34, the resumption of that echo in 22:41, the theme of the “Christ” and divine sonship in 22:42-45 (cf. Ps 2:7), and the utter defeat of his enemies in 22:46 may suggest that Matthew has read these accounts through the lens of the entirety of Ps 2 (Carter makes a similar point about 22:34-40, but he does not note the further connection with 22:41-46 [“Love as a Societal Vision,” 36]).

¹⁰⁵ Sand, *Matthäus*, 448.

¹⁰⁶ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 650; for similar comments, see Nolland, *Matthew*, 914.

link between the two passages through the echo of Ps 2. A few other comments further suggest as much.

Importantly, Matthew has not only eliminated Mark's more amiable ending to 22:34-40, but he has also stylized his ending: ἐν ταύταις ταῖς δυσὶν ἐντολαῖς ὅλος ὁ νόμος κρέμαται καὶ οἱ προφηῇται (22:40).¹⁰⁷ This pronouncement closely reflects Jesus' similar statement in 7:12c: οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφηῇται.¹⁰⁸ The parallel with 7:12 is important, because 7:12 sums up Jesus' teaching and climactically demonstrates his definition of "fulfillment" of the law (cf. 5:17); it also evidences his "authority" (ἐξουσία) that surpasses that of the scribes and "astounds" (ἐξεπλήσσοντο) the crowds (7:28-9).¹⁰⁹ Further, after 7:12 the sermon takes a decidedly christological and eschatological turn, as we argued above (cf. 7:21-27).¹¹⁰

Matt 22:40 serves a similar literary function to 7:12. Throughout chapters 21 and 22 Jesus has been questioned by various Jewish leaders, especially regarding his "authority" (21:16, 23, 24, 27; 22:17, 28). In each episode Jesus has demonstrated his authority over those leaders by his answers that "astound" (ἐξεπλήσσοντο, 22:33) or render his opponents mute (21:16, 27; 22:22), particularly with regard to interpreting Scripture (21:16, 42; 22:29). Matt 22:34-40 represents the final and greatest "test" in this series, which turns on the core of Israel's identity and Scriptures: what is the greatest commandment? Jesus again shows his superior authority by trumping their question for one commandment by giving two, along with a definitive statement about interpreting the

¹⁰⁷ Compare Mark – μείζων τούτων ἄλλη ἐντολὴ οὐκ ἔστιν (12:31) – which parallels the question in 12:28.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:355.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Gundry, *Matthew*, 125; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:685-6; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 1:269-70.

¹¹⁰ See pp. 123-28 above.

“law and the prophets” (22:40). Matt 22:40 is then followed, again like 7:12, by a passage that grounds Jesus’ authority for making such a pronouncement by turning cryptically to the question of his identity (22:41-46); it finally answers, literally speaking, the chief priests’ and elders’ initial question: ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιεῖς; καὶ τίς σοι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην; (21:23). As with the SM, his authority in 21-22 turns on his identity as the filial κύριος (again, see 119-123 above).

Noticing the numerous ways Matthew has framed 22:34-40 and 22:41-46 in hermeneutical relation to one another, with the themes of “the Christ” and his “authority” at the center, grants us better access to the christological impact of Jesus’ point about the filial identity of David’s κύριος. We have already seen above that Matthew particularly highlights the filial identity of “the Christ” as κύριος in 22:41-46, repeating the word four times. The interconnectedness of 22:34-40 and 22:41-46 thus leads to a further verbal link between the word κύριος:

22:37-38: ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν σου ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ καρδίᾳ σου . . . αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μεγάλη καὶ πρώτη ἐντολή

22:43-45: πῶς οὖν Δαυὶδ ἐν πνεύματι καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον λέγων· ⁴⁴ εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου· κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν σου; ⁴⁵ εἰ οὖν Δαυὶδ καλεῖ αὐτὸν κύριον, πῶς υἱὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν;

The verbal link between the two passages is strengthened by their Scriptural origin. Jesus answers the Pharisees’ final question with a Scriptural text about κύριος ὁ θεός. He then turns and questions them *from Scripture* about the identity of “the Christ,” whom David addresses as κύριος. More, Matthew’s addition of the clarifying question – τίνας υἱὸς ἐστίν; (22:42) – makes the link back to κύριος ὁ θεός of 22:37 more explicit,

since Jesus has repeatedly been called θεοῦ υἱός (in various forms). The greatest commandment is to love κύριος ὁ θεός σου, but Ps 110:1 – read in the context of Matt 22:41-45 – asserts that κύριος ὁ θεός has a “Son,” who is also κύριος. Indeed, this filial κύριος shares the divine throne with his Father.¹¹¹ Matthew’s unique linking of 22:34-40 and 22:41-46, along with his emphasis on the identity of “the Christ” as κύριος functions to set these two passages in counterpoint. While Jesus answers faithfully about κύριος ὁ θεός, the Pharisees show themselves ignorant of the answer to the question upon which the entire narrative turns – the identity of the Christ, the Son of κύριος ὁ θεός, the filial κύριος.¹¹² Jesus’ counter-question from Ps 110:1, set on the heels of Deut 6:5, thus serves to place a messianic and divine-filial “impress” on the identity of Israel’s κύριος.¹¹³ Put otherwise, the hermeuential effect of 22:41-46 is to impose retrospectively a certain christological pressure on the command to “love the Lord your God.”

Lest such a reading appear artificial, at least five further points suggest our interpretation reflects Matthew’s shaping of this material. First, a point not often thoroughly explored is Matthew’s deletion of Jesus’ initial answer in Mark 12:29, the first part of the Shema: ἄκουε, Ἰσραὴλ, κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστίν (cf. Deut 6:4). Davies and Allison comment in a footnote that “Matthew’s omission makes for an

¹¹¹ On God’s unique prerogative for sitting on his throne, cf. Richard Bauckham, “The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus” in *Jesus and the God of Israel: God Crucified and Other Studies on the New Testament’s Christology of Divine Identity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008). See also Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand*, 19-20.

¹¹² Interestingly, Schweizer points out both how Matthew has connected 22:41-46 with the preceding material and also that 22:41-46 represents the “the most important question of all” (*The Good News According to Matthew* [trans. David E. Green; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975], 427). However, he does not explore how those two important observations would actually alter one’s reading of the passages.

¹¹³ I take the language of “impress” from C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (BZNW 139; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 174.

increased ethical focus.”¹¹⁴ Hagner, noting the “surprising” omission, says that “Matthew omits it because it is not essential to the argument and because he can assume the readers’ association of the good commandment with the Shema.”¹¹⁵ Nolland, offering yet a different interpretation, suggests Matthew may have been using a different source at this point.¹¹⁶ None of these conjectural interpretations are supported explicitly by the passage or its context.¹¹⁷ Matthew’s close linking of 22:34-40 with the following passage suggests a different interpretation, the one offered above – Israel’s Shema is reshaped around the paternal and filial κύριος.¹¹⁸ While this is not to deny Matthew’s affirmation of the “one Lord,” his narrative, as we are arguing, complexifies that Lordship.¹¹⁹ The identity of the κύριος is now sufficiently articulated only as the Father and the Son. Indeed, as we will see below, Matthew reappropriates Israel’s language of “oneness” for the Father *and* the Christ/Son (23:8-10).

Second, we have already seen Matthew make a similar interpretive move throughout the narrative. In 4:10, Jesus affirms in the language of Deuteronomy

¹¹⁴ Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:241.

¹¹⁵ Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 645; similarly, Gundry, *Matthew*, 449.

¹¹⁶ Nolland, *Matthew*, 911 (cf. 908-909).

¹¹⁷ Hagner and Nolland depend on rather speculative data outside the text (the community/a second source). Even if Nolland is correct about a second source, which seems unlikely to me, it is doubtful that Matthew did not *also* have Mark, and thus he has made a choice to follow a source other than Mark for some reason. Davies’ and Allison’s explanation, while possible, seems to lack sufficient contextual support, and to speak of an “increased ethical focus” separates what Matthew consistently holds together – theology and ethics (Deut 6:4 being, in a sense, the grounds for 6:5).

¹¹⁸ On the rather extensive debate about why Matthew got the shema “wrong,” cf. C. M. Tuckett, “Matthew: The Social and Historical Context – Jewish Christian and/or Gentile?” in *The Gospel of Matthew at the Crossroads of Early Christianity* [ed. Donald Senior; BETL CCXLIII; Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2011], 108-16. Tuckett gives a good overview of the issues, but his conclusion that “the evidence might at least suggest Matthew himself was not accustomed to cite the Shema and perhaps had not been ‘Jewish’ for very long (if at all)” seems hasty, especially considering his assertion that Matthew is “very ‘positive’ about Judaism” (p. 116).

¹¹⁹ Though a debated point, Sanders, among many others, has made a strong case for the centrality of the Shema in ancient Jewish life (E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63BCE-66CE* [Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1992], 195-7).

6:13/10:20 that, κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις, but the narrative then goes on to show Jesus as the (only other) recipient of προσκύνησις (see esp. our discussion of 14:33 above). It is, we have argued, Matthew’s narrative christology that reshapes the readers’ sensibilities to who in fact legitimately receives προσκύνησις, and thus who Israel’s “Lord God” *is*. Our suggested reading of 22:34-46 takes its cue from a pattern the narrative has already established – Jesus cites a foundational text from Israel’s Scriptures (Deut), and yet that text is reshaped christologically by the story of the Son.

Third, we have seen Jesus narrated as the filial repetition of the paternal κύριος at numerous points in the narrative already. Our survey of 3:1-17, 11:1-12.8, and 14:22-33 served to underscore the mutuality of Father and Son as κύριος. Further, we saw that Matthew does this precisely by applying to Jesus OT texts and themes that have YHWH as their referent. Thus, when one arrives at 22:34-46, the linking of Father and Son through their identity as κύριος only reinforces what the reader has experienced repeatedly.

Fourth, the Matthean Jesus ends his commissioning of the disciples in chapter 10 with what might be called a christologically-expanded version of the love command in 22:37:

Ὁ φιλῶν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα ὑπὲρ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος, καὶ ὁ φιλῶν υἱὸν ἢ θυγατέρα ὑπὲρ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος.³⁸ καὶ ὃς οὐ λαμβάνει τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου, οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος.³⁹ ὁ εὐρὼν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἀπολέσει αὐτήν, καὶ ὁ ἀπολέσας τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἔνεκεν ἐμοῦ εὕρήσει αὐτήν.⁴⁰ Ὁ δεχόμενος ὑμᾶς ἐμὲ δέχεται, καὶ ὁ ἐμὲ δεχόμενος δέχεται τὸν ἀποστείλαντά με (10:37-40).

Space permits only a few comments on this crucial text. Importantly, the Lukan counterpart, which bears a similar meaning, nonetheless reads rather differently:

εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς με καὶ οὐ μισεῖ τὸν πατέρα ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ τὰς ἀδελφὰς ἔτι τε καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ, οὐ δύναται εἶναι μου μαθητής.¹²⁰ ὅστις οὐ βαστάζει τὸν σταυρὸν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ ἔρχεται ὀπίσω μου, οὐ δύναται εἶναι μου μαθητής (Luke 14:26-7).¹²⁰

The intensified christological focus of Matthew's version becomes manifest when set next to Luke's. A double call to undivided "love" for Jesus introduces a text that comes back to "me" over and over, and ends with the reception of Jesus as the reception of the Father (cf. the immediately preceding 10:32-33 for paternal and filial language). Further, Matthew's use of a positive verb, "love," for devotion to Jesus couches the declaration in biblical terms.¹²¹ More particularly, the only other figure in Israel's Scripture who demands a loving devotion compared to that which is due to Israel's God is Wisdom:

Prov 8:17: ἐγὼ τοὺς ἐμὲ φιλοῦντας ἀγαπῶ οἱ δὲ ἐμὲ ζητοῦντες εὐρήσουσιν

Wis 7:10: ὑπὲρ ὑγίειαν καὶ εὐμορφίαν ἠγάπησα αὐτὴν καὶ προειλόμην αὐτὴν ἀντὶ φωτὸς ἔχειν ὅτι ἀκοίμητον τὸ ἐκ ταύτης φέγγος.

Sir 4:11-14: ὁ ἀγαπῶν αὐτὴν ἀγαπᾷ ζωὴν . . . ὁ κρατῶν αὐτῆς κληρονομήσει δόξαν καὶ οὗ εἰσπορεύεται εὐλογεῖ κύριος. οἱ λατρεύοντες αὐτῇ λειτουργήσουσιν ἀγίῳ καὶ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας αὐτὴν ἀγαπᾷ ὁ κύριος

I am not arguing that Matthew is necessarily drawing on any particular Wisdom text in 10:37-40, though there is some compelling overlap with the three texts above.¹²² Rather,

¹²⁰ Matt 10:40 is paralleled by Luke 10:16

¹²¹ Matthew does not appear to differentiate significantly between φιλέω and ἀγαπάω. He follows the LXX in using ἀγαπάω in biblical citations or in contexts that refer back to those texts, which can refer to God or humans (cf. 5:43, 44, 46; 19:19; 22:37, 39; though cf. 6:24). In non-scriptural contexts, he uses φιλέω (6:5; 10:37; 23:6).

¹²² The parallel with Prov 8:17 is intriguing for several reasons. First, the use of φιλέω in the LXX is rather limited (I count 28 occurrences), and the vast majority of the uses mean "kiss." Of the five instances where

he has couched Jesus' demand for undivided "love" for himself in the sort of language that appears only for Israel's God and his personal Wisdom.¹²³ Jesus' command is all the more striking considering Matthew's deep indebtedness to Deuteronomy, where it is stressed repeatedly that Israel should "love the Lord your God" (though ἀγαπάω there).¹²⁴ Further, lest it appear 10:37-40 and 22:34-40 are unrelated, it is important to recall the different settings in which 10:37-40 and 22:34-40 occur. The former is given privately to the disciples (10:1), those privy to the mysteries of the kingdom (13:11) and Jesus'

it is used in a more "weighty" or "religious" sense, it connotes either love for Wisdom (Prov 8:17; 29:3) or love for idolatrous "lovers" or idolatrous food (Jer 22:22; Lam 1:2; Hos 3:1). That is, it can connote a type of devotion for which Israel's God is "jealous." Second, Prov 8:17 is the only place in the LXX where a figure implicitly (or explicitly, for that matter) commands to be "loved" using the verb φιλέω. Third, there are several points of important verbal overlap between Prov 8:17 and Matt 10:37-40. The phrase τοὺς ἐμὲ φιλοῦντας along with the repetition ἐμὲ in Prov 8:17 is quite close to the phrase Ὁ φιλῶν πατέρα ἢ μητέρα ὑπὲρ ἐμὲ and the constant repetition of ἐμέ/μου in Matt 10:37-40. Prov 8:17 also speaks of seeking Wisdom and "finding me" (οἱ δὲ ἐμὲ ζητοῦντες εὕρησουσιν), and goes on to claim that true "wealth and glory" are in her (8:18). Matt 10:39 warns of "finding" one's life (ὁ εὕρων τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ) to one's own demise, while losing it "for my sake one will find it" (ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ εὕρησει αὐτήν). All of these factors point toward an allusion to Prov 8:17 in Matt 10:37-40. Wis 7 and Sir 4 further suggest Wisdom themes in Matt 10:37-40, such as loving Wisdom over highly valued things (Wis 7:10), one's "love for" and "service to" Wisdom being equal to loving and serving ὁ κύριος (Sir 4:14/Matt 10:40), and, though not quoted above, the notion of God "sending forth" his Wisdom (Wis 9:10/Matt 10:40). Moreover, Matthew's probable use of Wisdom themes for Jesus elsewhere in the Gospel makes its presence here more likely (of course, Matthew's use of a "Wisdom christology" is debated. See the rest of this note for relevant literature). Surprisingly, in the standard works on "Wisdom" in Matthew, there is hardly a comment on 10:37-40 (cf. Felix Christ, *Jesus Sophia: Die Sophia-Christologie bei den Synoptikern* [ATANT 57; Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1970]; Suggs, *Wisdom, Christology and Law in Matthew's Gospel*; R. G. Hamerton-Kelly, *Pre-Existence, Wisdom, and the Son of Man: A Study of the Idea of Pre-Existence in the New Testament* [SNTSMS 21; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973]; Hermann von Lips, *Weisheitliche Traditionen im Neuen Testament* [WMANT 64; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1990]; Deutsch, *Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke*; idem, *Lady Wisdom, Jesus, and the Sages: Metaphor and Social Context in Matthew's Gospel* [Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1996]; Frances Taylor Gench, *Wisdom in the Christology of Matthew* [New York: University Press of America, 1997]). For those opposed to a strong identification of Jesus with Wisdom in Matthew, while nonetheless noting Matthew's occasional use of Wisdom themes, cf., e.g., Marshall D. Johnson, "Reflections on a Wisdom Approach to Matthew's Christology," *CBQ* 36 [1974]: 44-64; Graham Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 364-77; Ulrich Luz, "The Fulfilment of the Law in Matthew: Matt. 5:17-20," in *Studies in Matthew* [tran. Rosemary Selle; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005], 212 n. 113; Simon J. Gathercole, *The Pre-Existent Son: Recovering the Christologies of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006], 193-213).

¹²³ See also, for example, the transparently idolatrous claims for absolute loyalty by Nebuchadnezzar in Judith (e.g., 2:4-13; 3:1-8); Cf. also Gustav Stählin's comments on "φιλέω": "Jesus claims . . . the superabundance of love that is due to God" (*TDNT*, IX: 129).

¹²⁴ Further instructive is the oft-cited Deut 33:9, which praises Levi for forsaking "father and mother" on account of his calling to serve YHWH as priest (cf. also 4Q175 16-17).

identity (e.g., 14:33; 16:17; 17:9). Matt 22:34-40, however, occurs publicly, where an overt call to loving Jesus on par with Israel's God would break the narrative's pattern of obscuring his identity and self-claims at the public level, at least until the resurrection (e.g., 17:9).¹²⁵ For the reader of Matthew's Gospel, the memorably repetitious and forceful command to love Jesus in 10:37-40, which serves as the impetus behind the Church's very existence-in-mission, places in christological perspective the traditional command to "love the Lord your God" in 22:37.

II.1.2 Matthew 23 – The “one” Father; the “one” Christ

The fifth point leads us to a lengthier discussion of what follows 22:41-46, that is, chapter 23. In Garland's detailed study of this chapter, he notes Matthew's careful shaping of the material, such that "his rearrangement and juxtaposition of independent units of tradition gave them a significance which they did not previously possess."¹²⁶ More specifically, he argues that Matthew has shaped 22:41-46 to lead directly into Jesus' (in)famous denunciation of the Pharisees.¹²⁷ Matthew sharpens the connection linguistically between 22:41-46 and chapter 23: Jesus' question about "the Christ" (22:41) ends with the Pharisees' inability to answer (22:46); Matthew then contrasts their incompetence with the unique teaching authority of "the Christ" at the end of the first block of material in chapter 23 (23:8-10; cf. 21:22, 33; 22:46).¹²⁸ Further the

¹²⁵ For example, as we saw before, in 11:25-30 the reader overhears Jesus refer to himself explicitly as the Son of the Father, while in the very next scene (12:1-8) with the Pharisees he refers to himself cryptically as the Son of Man.

¹²⁶ *Intention*, 23.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 23-6.

¹²⁸ Garland, following Haenchen, calls 23:8-12 a "resting point, the quiet before the storm" (*Intention*, 22).

christological language of 23:8-12 reactivates Jesus' recent exposition of the identity of "the Christ" in 22:41-46 – he is the divine-filial κύριος. In 23:8-12 Matthew further extends the themes of 22:41-46 by bringing "Christ" language into close relation with his paternal and filial idiom:

8: ὑμεῖς δὲ μὴ κληθῆτε ῥαββί· εἷς γάρ ἐστιν ὑμῶν ὁ διδάσκαλος, πάντες δὲ ὑμεῖς ἀδελφοί ἐστε.

9: καὶ πατέρα μὴ καλέσητε ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, εἷς γάρ ἐστιν ὑμῶν ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος.

10: μηδὲ κληθῆτε καθηγηταί, ὅτι καθηγητὴς ὑμῶν ἐστιν εἷς ὁ Χριστός.

Consistent with the rest of the Gospel, when referring to the disciples' relationship with the Father Jesus calls him "your father" (ὑμῶν ὁ πατήρ), which is reiterated in his emphatic statement, ὑμεῖς ἀδελφοί ἐστε.¹²⁹ As we have just observed in 22:41-46, Jesus bears a unique divine sonship – he is the divine-filial κύριος – which is here re-invoked by placing himself as ὁ χριστός *above* the disciples' fraternal relation to one another and their filial relation to "their" father.¹³⁰ That is, they belong to the Father, because "the Christ," the unique Son whom David addresses as "Lord," is their "teacher."¹³¹

These various points of contact between 22:41-46 and 23:8-12 preclude us from interpreting 23:8-12 apart from its literary relationship to 22:41-46, which happens with surprising frequency. The Christ who speaks here is the filial κύριος of 22:41-46, making

¹²⁹ Cf. Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:369; idem, *Jahwebund und Kirche Christi: Studien zur Form- und Traditionsgeschichte des Evangeliums nach Matthäus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973), 179.

¹³⁰ This does not contradict 12:50, since Jesus' familial relation to his disciples in that verse is based on his unique sonship ("my Father") and their execution of his Father's will (embodied in Jesus' teaching and life, cf. 7:21-29; 16:21-28; 20:24-48; 23:8-12).

¹³¹ Jesus' identity as teacher in 23:8 is further attached to his identity as the unique Son in 11:27-30 (he is the Son who gives rest and from whom the disciples "learn"). Cf. also John P. Meier, *Matthew* (Collegeville, Minn: The Liturgical Press, 1980), 264-5.

Matthew's three-part parallelism in 23:8-10, which turns on the adjective "one," all the more pronounced. To that parallelism we now turn.

A number of scholars have noted that the central assertion in 23:8-10 – εἷς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ μὶς ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος – readily evokes both the first portion of Israel's Shema (Deut 6:4) and Mal 2:10, the latter itself probably drawing on the Shema:¹³²

Matt 23:9: καὶ πατέρα μὴ καλέσητε ὁ μὶς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, εἷς γάρ ἐστιν ὁ μὶς ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος.

Mal 2:10: οὐχὶ θεὸς εἷς ἔκτισεν ὁ μὶς; οὐχὶ πατήρ εἷς πάντων ὁ μὶς;

Deut 6:4: ἄκουε Ἰσραὴλ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστιν

Further, the linking of a reference to "God" with the adjective "one" (εἷς) in Matt 23:9 constitutes what Rainbow has called one of the "ten forms of explicit Jewish monotheistic speech" in early Judaism.¹³³ That is, Matthew's language for the Father here invokes the common Jewish confession of the one God of Israel.¹³⁴ But 23:8 and 10, the christological frame for that confession, complexifies this common "monotheistic" manner of speaking. Nolland, after commenting on the implicit appeal in Matt 23:9 to Deut 6:4 and Mal 2:10 says, "We cannot be sure of this [allusion to Deut and Mal] because the parallel language of oneness is used in Mt. 23:8 for the one teacher, who is clearly Jesus and not God."¹³⁵ The allusion is dulled and perhaps non-existent, argues

¹³² Cf., e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:277; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:107; Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew*, 241, n. 41; Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 661; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:369-70.

¹³³ Paul A. Rainbow, "Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8.4-6" (D. Phil. diss.; Oxford University, 1987), 45, 47.

¹³⁴ Cf. Paul A. Rainbow, "Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology: A Review Article," *NovT* 33 (1991): 83. Rainbow has helpfully shown elsewhere how individual words like "one" (εἷς) worked metonymically within the Jewish monotheism schema. The use of a single word could, in the proper context, evoke that most basic world-ordering notion in early Judaism, viz., devotion to the one God (cf. "Monotheism and Christology," 37-41, 59-65).

¹³⁵ *Matthew*, 928.

Nolland, because the two-part christological formula in 23:8 and 10 shares the language of “oneness.” But what if it were the other way around? What if Matthew has christologically reshaped Israel’s monotheistic speech much as we have already seen the narrative suggesting?

An affirmative answer to these questions emerges from several important observations about 23:8 and 23:10. Regarding the structure of 23:8 & 10, the majority of scholars take them as parallel statements; both have the same referent, ὁ χριστός, even though there is no explicit referent in 23:8.¹³⁶

23:8: ὑμεῖς δὲ μὴ κληθῆτε ῥαββί· εἷς γάρ ἐστιν ὑμῶν ὁ διδάσκαλος, πάντες δὲ ὑμεῖς ἀδελφοί ἐστε.

23:10: μηδὲ κληθῆτε καθηγηταί, ὅτι καθηγητὴς ὑμῶν ἐστιν εἷς ὁ Χριστός.

This reading of 23:8 and 23:10 indeed appears to be the best one, because (1) the terms ὁ διδάσκαλος and καθηγητὴς serve here as near synonyms,¹³⁷ the latter of which stands in apposition to “the Christ” in 23:10;¹³⁸ (2) throughout the Gospel Jesus’ identity as he who teaches and as the one from whom the disciples “learn” is more strongly emphasized than any other Gospel (e.g., 10:25; 11:29; 17:24; 26:18; 28:20);¹³⁹ (3) the reference in 23:8 to the disciples’ as “brothers” because of their “one teacher” evokes the christological shape to Matthew’s discipleship/children-of-the-Father motif (e.g., 7:21-4; 12:50).

¹³⁶ Cf., e.g., Ernst Haenchen, “Matthäus 23,” in *Das Matthäus-Evangelium* (ed. Joachim Lange; Wege der Forschung 525; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 139; Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 253, n. 288; Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:276; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:276; Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 337; Nolland, *Matthew*, 928; Luz, *Matthew*, 3:107; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:369; France, *Matthew*, 862.

¹³⁷ For a discussion of the difference/similarity between these two terms, see Garland, *Intention*, 60.

¹³⁸ Cf. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom*, 93.

¹³⁹ In 26:18 Jesus refers to himself explicitly as “teacher” (διδάσκαλος) and implicitly so in 10:24-25 (interestingly, the latter is in parallel with himself as “Lord/master” [κύριος]). Cf. also Bonnard, *Matthieu*, 419.

But 23:8 does in fact leave some ambiguity as to the referent. Whereas 23:9 explicitly refers to the Father, and 23:10 explicitly refers to the Christ, the “one” διδάσκαλος in 23:8 is not further specified. Knowles has picked up on this ambiguity precisely because of the OT allusions at play in 23:8.¹⁴⁰ Partially following J.D.M. Derrett,¹⁴¹ Knowles has argued that Matt 23:8 constitutes a conflation Isa 54:13 and Jer 31:33-4, texts that speak of eschatological teaching directly from Israel’s God:

Isa 54:13: καὶ πάντας τοὺς υἱοὺς σου διδασκτοὺς θεοῦ καὶ ἐν πολλῇ εἰρήνῃ τὰ τέκνα σου.¹⁴²

Jer. 31:33 (LXX, 38:33): ὅτι αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη ἦν διαθήσομαι τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας ἐκείνας φησὶν κύριος διδούς δώσω νόμους μου εἰς τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπὶ καρδίᾳς αὐτῶν γράψω αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς εἰς θεόν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μοι εἰς λαόν.

On account of these allusions Knowles concludes that 23:8 does not necessarily refer to Jesus, but could just as easily refer to the Father.¹⁴³ His logic appears to be that since the OT allusions referred originally to Israel’s God, and since 23:9 and 10 use parallel language for the Father and the Christ, a clear reference to Jesus in 23:8 is obscured. But as we saw above, by far the most natural referent for ὁ διδάσκαλος *in the Matthean context* is Jesus, ὁ Χριστός of 23:10.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Michael Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel: The Rejected Prophet Motif in Matthean Redaction* (JSNTSup 68; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 209-212; see also Schweizer (*The Good News According to Matthew*, 431) and the margin of NA.²⁸

¹⁴¹ “Mt 23,8-10 a Midrash on Is 54,13 and Jer 31,33-34” *Bib* 62 (1981): 372-86. Derrett notes that as far back as Theodore Beza in 1556, Matt 23:8-10 was read in concert with Isa 54:13 and Jer 31-34 (p. 372).

¹⁴² Note the MT has יהוה in place of the LXX’s θεοῦ.

¹⁴³ *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel*, 212, and cf. 210-11.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. also Kenneth Newport, *The Sources and Sitz im Leben of Matthew 23* (JSNTSup 117; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 131, 132. Garland likewise notes the ambiguity of 23:8 and says, “The ambiguity of whether or not v. 8 refers to God, as does v. 9, or Jesus, perhaps is not unintentional since, for Matthew, Jesus was ‘God with us’” (*Intention*, 59, n.97). Garland has made an important observation about the ambiguity in 23:8 and the resultant christological effect of that ambiguity. There are, however, at least two problems with his way of phrasing the matter. First, one cannot so easily assume that Jesus as “Emmanuel” identifies Jesus with God, because, as many scholars are wont to point out, the phrase μεθ’

Indeed, Nolland's and Knowles' arguments appear to be the mirror image of one another. On the one hand, Nolland, despite the widely-recognized Shema-like language in 23:9, minimizes those OT allusions because in 23:8 and 10 the same language has a christological force. On the other hand, Knowles, because of OT allusions that refer to YHWH, relativizes the christological force of 23:8. Luz is one of the very few¹⁴⁵ scholars who attempts to hold together what Matthew has done in 23:8-10: "The three 'one' (εἷς) affirmations remind the readers of the Shema, Israel's basic confession to the one God. It remains the confession of the Jesus community; here, however, as in 1 Cor 8:6, there is added the confession to the one Christ, Israel's Messiah."¹⁴⁶ Luz does not pursue this line of interpretation in any more depth, nor does he interpret it in light of the christologically-charged dialogue in 22:34-46 that turns on Jesus' identity as ὁ χριστός, the filial κύριος. We should, however, note seven interrelated points that require us to reckon with Matthew's christological re-articulation of Israel's "oneness" language in this passage:¹⁴⁷

1. Matthew has transparently invoked Shema-like language in 23:9: εἷς . . . ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος.

ἡμῶν ὁ θεός (1:23) is itself inherently ambiguous (there is a significant christological difference between "God is with us [in Jesus]" and "[Jesus *is*] God with us"; see the discussion below). Second, Garland's formulation may too quickly conflate "Jesus" and "God" without accounting for the clear distinction in 23:8-10 (and elsewhere in the Gospel) between the "Father" and "the Christ."

¹⁴⁵ Cf. also Mark Allan Powell (*God With Us: A Pastoral Theology of Matthew's Gospel* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995], 95) and Lloyd Gaston ("The Messiah of Israel as Teacher of the Gentiles: The Setting of Matthew's Christology," in *Interpreting the Gospels* [ed. James Luther Mays; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981], 94) for brief but helpful comments.

¹⁴⁶ Luz, *Matthew*, 3:107. He adds in a footnote, "In fact, v.9 is bracketed by the Christological verses 8 and 10. This is an example of Matthew's 'high' Christology" (*Matthew*, 3:107, n.93). Elsewhere in the same commentary, however, Luz relativizes this "high" christology by saying that Matthew does not mean to equate Jesus with God, but that "God acts through Jesus." Matthew's is a "functional" Christology (*Matthew*, 3:639; cf. also 1:96).

¹⁴⁷ After working on this material, I came across Samuel Byrskog's *Jesus the Only Teacher: Didactic Authority and Transmission in Ancient Israel, Ancient Judaism, and the Matthean Community* (ConBNT 24; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1994). He comes to similar conclusions as those which I make below (see esp. pp 299-302).

2. He frames that paternal “oneness” language with a two-fold christological referent that applies that same language (εἷς) to “the Christ” (23:8, 10), creating a symmetrical, three-part series that turns on the word “one.” That is, it is not simply the christological use of “oneness” language that is striking, but the use of it in a confessional-like formula in close connection with Israel’s basic confession of “one Father.”

3. The theological import of this christological appropriation of “oneness” language is strengthened when we consider that “although pagans applied εἷς- or μόνος- formulae to multiple gods and goddesses in a merely elative sense, Jews never applied this type of formula to their intermediaries, but reserved them very stringently for God alone.”¹⁴⁸ Matthew has christologically appropriated language that activates Israel’s “monotheistic” schema.¹⁴⁹

4. Matthew further reinforces a christological articulation of Israel’s “one” Lord in 23:8 & 10 by following a pattern he has already established – the *christological* fulfillment of OT texts that referred to YHWH. Here, it is Jeremiah’s and Isaiah’s vision of the direct, eschatological teaching of Israel by its κύριος.

5. Further, on a contextual level, we showed above that 23:8-10 cannot be separated from its close narrative counterpart, 22:41-46. There, “the Christ” is defined as the filial κύριος who shares the divine throne with his Father, κύριος ὁ θεός (22:37).

6. Likewise, Matthew’s christological application of “oneness” language is all the more striking when we recall his deletion of Mark’s reference to the first portion of the Shema in 22:37 (Mark 12:29), only to reappropriate similar language here with reference to the Father and “the Christ.”

¹⁴⁸ Rainbow, “Jewish Monotheism,” 83.

¹⁴⁹ Jewish literature could use “oneness” language with reference to Israel, the law, the Temple, even the king, because all of those correspond to the “one” God (cf., e.g. 2 Bar. 48:23-4; Jos., *Ant.* 4:201; cf. Ezek 34:23; 37:24). Rainbow’s point about “intermediaries,” however, yields an important distinction regarding Jewish usage of “oneness” language. Correlative to the “refusal tradition,” the use of “oneness” language for an *intermediary* might appear to transgress the boundaries of language appropriate only for Israel’s God, whereas such language in other settings ran no such risk. Matthew, similar to his use of the word προσκυνέω, draws on the language of “oneness” in 23:8-10 that creates an identity of devotion to the Father and “the Christ” (note the suggestive connection between the “one” God and his “one” Temple in Philo, *Spec.* 1:67).

7. Finally, Matthew’s narrative-wide reshaping of the identity of Israel’s κύριος around the filial κύριος, which we have observed at numerous points, sensitizes us to the extension of that reshaping here in 23:8-10.¹⁵⁰

This line of interpretation is further reinforced by the climactic ending to chapters 21-23, that is, 23:37-24:2.¹⁵¹ Without going into the many interpretive issues, we simply note how Matthew has concluded the Temple episode, which began with Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem (21:1-17), in a manner deeply consonant with and illuminatory of our previous discussion. We therefore turn briefly to the rest of Matt 23 to illuminate the unified christological grammar we have traced thus far.

Chapter 23 naturally falls into two parts, the first of which serves as instruction/warning for those who follow “the Christ,” i.e., the Church (cf. 23:8-12), and the second of which serves as a pronouncement of judgment against the “hypocrites,” those who have rejected “the Christ” and his messengers (cf. 23:34, 37-39):

<p><u>23:1-12: Warning/Exhortation to the Church:</u></p> <p>23:1: Address to the “crowds and disciples” about the “scribes and Pharisees”</p> <p>23:2-7: 3rd person denunciation of hypocritical scribal and Pharisaic practices</p>	<p><u>23:13-39: Judgment on “scribes and Pharisees” and “this generation”</u></p> <p>23:13-33: 2nd person/direct address to “scribes and Pharisees,” continuing and heightening the denunciation begun in 23:2-7.</p> <p>23:34-36: The climax of the woes is “judgment” upon “this generation” resulting from their (past) rejection of God’s messengers and current/future rejection of Jesus and his messengers</p>
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¹⁵⁰ Also, as mentioned by Luz above, there is an early Christian precedent for christologically reshaping the language of the Shema in 1 Cor 8:6 (cf. esp. N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993], 120-136); cf. also Jude 4.

¹⁵¹ On 21-23 as a literary unit, see Gourgues, *A La Droite de Dieu*, 127-9. Note that the quotation of Ps 118:26 in 23:39 forms an inclusio with the quotation of the same verse in 21:9. This is not, however, to separate 23 from what follows in 24-25 (for a helpful discussion of the connection of 23 with both 21-22 and 24-25, see Jason Hood, “Matthew 23-25: The Extent of Jesus’ Fifth Discourse,” *JBL* 128 [2009]: 527-43).

23:8-12: Christologically-centered exhortation and counter-example for Jesus' disciples	23:37-39: Christologically-centered lamentation for and pronouncement against "Jerusalem" and its "house"
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A number of studies have analyzed Matthew's careful structuring of chapter 23,¹⁵² and the brief outline above illuminates the christological climax to which both parts of chapter 23 build. We saw earlier that 23:1-12 ends with an exhortation to Jesus' disciples grounded in the Church's basic twofold, Shema-like confession of the one Christ and the one Father. The second section, addressed to the opposing community – those who have rejected "the Christ" – ends with an equally striking christological set of pronouncements. The rejection of the Christ, that is, leads to the "abandonment" of Israel's "house," much like the departure of God's glory from the Temple in Ezekiel and Jeremiah.¹⁵³ In Matthew, however, the abandonment of the Temple by God is equated with Jesus' own departure. While Nolland has rejected the view that Jesus' departure from the Temple *is* the departure of God's presence, three factors point precisely in that direction.¹⁵⁴ First, the flow of the passage itself suggests as much:

23:38: ἰδοὺ ἀφίεται ὑμῖν ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν ἔρημος.

23:39: λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν, οὐ μὴ με ἴδητε ἀπ' ἄρτι ἕως ἂν εἴπητε· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου.

¹⁵² Cf., e.g., Haenchen, "Matthäus 23." For a helpful discussion of the complex issues surrounding Jesus' apparent endorsement of the scribes and Pharisees in 23:2-3, see Powell's excursus in *God with Us*, 75-81.

¹⁵³ As noted by many. Cf., e.g., Daniel M. Gurtner, "Matthew's Theology of the Temple and the 'Parting of the Ways,'" in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew* (eds. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 144-5; Gundry, *Matthew*, 473.

¹⁵⁴ Nolland, *Matthew*, 958. Likewise, though not commenting directly on the issue, Gnilka (*Matthäusevangelium*, 2:311) and Hagner (*Matthew* 14-28, 687) avoid identifying Jesus' departure with the departure of God's presence. Davies and Allison say that the passive "is left to you" of 23:38 "may" refer to Jesus' departure (*Matthew*, 3:322-3).

24:1: Καὶ ἐξελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἐπορεύετο . . .

24:2: οὐ βλέπετε ταῦτα πάντα; ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, οὐ μὴ ἀφεθῇ ὧδε λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον ὃς οὐ καταλυθήσεται

As Haenchen noted some time ago, “Das Passiv *wird verlassen* [in 23:38] ersetzt die Nennung des Gottesnamens: die Schechina, die bisher schirmend darin waltete, verläßt jetzt zusammen mit Jesus den Tempel. Daß Mt die Worte in diesem . . . Sinn aufgefaßt hat, dafür scheint uns das γὰρ zu sprechen, welches v. 38 und 39 verknüpft.”¹⁵⁵ Just as Jesus speaks in the first person in 23:34 of sending “prophets, wise men, and scribes,”¹⁵⁶ so now the Temple’s¹⁵⁷ desolation in 23:38 is tied directly to his impending departure (23:39 - λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν, οὐ μὴ με ἴδῃτε).¹⁵⁸ The divine passive of 23:38 (ἀφίεται) is fulfilled in the active presence of Jesus.

Second, Matthew’s redaction of this passage further supports our interpretation. Whereas Mark (12:41-44) includes the pericope of the Widow’s Mite between Jesus’ lament and his departure from the Temple, Matthew deletes that pericope so as to draw Jesus’ pronouncement about the Temple’s desolation and his departure into closer hermeneutical relation. As a result, Jesus’ “departure” (24:1) from the Temple and his

¹⁵⁵ “Matthäus 23,” 151.

¹⁵⁶ We have not discussed 23:34-6 at length. Whether or not this passage supports a “Wisdom christology” in Matthew (cf. Luke 11:49), as is commonly argued, it functions hand-in-hand literarily with 23:37-24:2: Jesus, the filial κύριος/χριστός speaks like YHWH (cf. Jer 7:25-6) and in a manner reminiscent of the Shekhinah (cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:320). See more on Jesus as the Shekhinah below.

¹⁵⁷ I take “the house” (ὁ οἶκος) of 23:38 to refer to the Temple (cf. 21:13 and 24:1), though a strong distinction between the Temple and Jerusalem should not be envisioned.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. also Garland, *Intention*, 32; Gurtner, “Matthew’s Theology of the Temple,” 144-5; Charles Talbert, *Matthew* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 260-61. Further, note that Luke’s version lacks the connective “for”: ἰδοὺ ἀφίεται ὑμῖν ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν κτλ. (13:35); cf. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung*, 141.

pronouncement of its impending downfall (24:2) enacts what he has just spoken in 23:38-9 (οὐ μὴ με ἴδῃτε ἀπ’ ἄρτι).¹⁵⁹

Third and finally, the citation of Ps 118:26 in Matt 23:39 (εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου) brings together two key terms that have served critical roles in the narrative thus far. We have already seen that Jesus’ identity as “the coming one” is closely tied to his identity as Lord, the Christ, and the Son (see the discussions above of 3:1-17 and 11:1-12:8). So also in 22:41-6 Jesus argued that the paternity of the Christ turned on his identity as David’s Lord – he is David’s Lord because he is the Son of the paternal Lord. The re-invocation of that same language (ὁ ἐρχόμενος, κύριος) in 23:39 evokes what the reader has encountered repeatedly – the “coming one” is the one who shares in the name of the paternal κύριος and who promises his presence to the community gathered “in his name” (18:20; cf. 1:23; 28:20).¹⁶⁰ The one who speaks of departing and returning is the one whom the reader has come to know as the filial repetition of the Father, and thus the departure (and return) of his presence from (to) the Temple can be spoken of as the departure and return of the presence of Israel’s God. The “one” God’s earthly presence is now bound up with the “one” Christ, the Father’s Son.

II.1.3 Intermediate Summary

We have seen thus far that 22:41-46 articulates *in nuce* several christological threads that are woven into the fabric of the narrative from beginning to end. In the double movement of appropriating Israel’s prophetic promises and narratively reshaping

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:393.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 106-7.

them around the life of Jesus, Matthew has christologically articulated the identity of Israel's κύριος; the “one” paternal κύριος has come to expression in the human life of the “one” Christ, the filial κύριος. What remains to be seen is how the narrative further expresses this double movement in the one κύριος by tying together Jesus’ identity as “Son” and “Emmanuel.”

Part III – The Son, the Emmanuel: 1:21-25, 18:19-20, 28:19-20 & Matthew’s Theological Grammar

While we cannot explore in full many of the remaining passages relevant to our argument above, we wish to note how Matthew has elsewhere tied his Emmanuel motif closely to Jesus’ identity as the Son of God. Such an observation further confirms the trajectory of our argument, namely, the narrative reshaping of the identity of Israel’s κύριος around the Father-Son relation. Since 1:23 and its relation to Matthew’s “Son of God” christology has elicited some controversy, we will come to it last, turning first to 18:19-20 and 28:16-20.

III.1 Matt 18:19-20 – The Son and the Community

It has long been noted that 1:23, 18:20, and 28:20 are closely related,¹⁶¹ and indeed those passages are only the explicit expression of a theme – the eschatological presence of God “in the person and mission” of Jesus – running throughout the

¹⁶¹ For a list of scholars who have discussed the relation of these passages, cf. Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom*, 69 n.76.

narrative.¹⁶² Less often noticed is the way in which these passages connect with Matthew's articulation of Jesus' divine-filial identity, and indeed the connection is sometimes denied.¹⁶³ In 18:19-20 three important christological strands come together to undergird Jesus' assurance about prayer: Jesus' divine-filial identity, his "name," and his status as Emmanuel:

18:19c-20: . . . περὶ παντὸς πράγματος οὗ ἐὰν αἰτήσωνται, γενήσεται αὐτοῖς παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς. οὗ γάρ εἰσιν δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἑμὸν ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν.

Reflecting a pattern established in 1:21-23, in 18:19-20 Matthew again ties Jesus' name (εἰς τὸ ἑμὸν ὄνομα) closely to his identity as Emmanuel (εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν). In 18:19-20 the divine-filial element is explicitly added (τοῦ πατρὸς μου ἐν οὐρανοῖς), which is consistent with the two passages that flank it on either side.¹⁶⁴ The logic of the passage is that disciples can call on the Father *in heaven* with confidence because his filial counterpart, the one who is Emmanuel, is *among them*. This is precisely the way the image of the Shekhinah is at work here.¹⁶⁵ Matthew has appropriated a way of expressing the form in which the God of heaven dwells with his people and "transposed" it into a christological key.¹⁶⁶ Jesus, the Son to whom the disciples have bound themselves and who uniquely communicates the Father's presence, is the immanent, filial presence of

¹⁶² Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 235-6; cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 3:634.

¹⁶³ E.g., Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 171-3; though cf. Kingsbury, *op. cit.*, 43-4, 69-70, 77-8.

¹⁶⁴ Three times in a row Jesus' exhortation is couched in terms of "my Father" (ὁ πατὴρ μου, 18:10, 14[?], 19, 35).

¹⁶⁵ Matt 18:20 is now commonly seen to express something like the rabbinic notion of the Shekhinah. See, for example, Joseph Sievers, "'Where Two or Three . . .': The Rabbinic Concept of Shekhinah and Matthew 18:20," in *The Jewish Roots of Christian Liturgy* (ed. Eugene J. Fisher; New York: Paulist Press, 1990), 47-61. For a dated but still insightful discussion on the Shekhinah, see George Foot Moore, "Intermediaries in Jewish Theology: Memra, Shekinah, Metatron," *HTR* 15 (1922): 41-85.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*. Volume 1 of *Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 258-9.

Israel's God.¹⁶⁷ We have already seen Matthew make a similar christological move – the Son is the κύριος who is “greater than the Temple,” and as such he ratifies his disciples’ actions (11:25-12:8; see above). In 18:19-20, Matthew re-invokes that same theme.

These observations are particularly relevant in light of our study of Matthew’s cultic language for Jesus, since 18:19-20 reflects a cultic setting (Christians gathering together).¹⁶⁸ Though this passage focuses on discipline within the Christian community – not on the worship of Jesus *per se* – it nonetheless contributes to the logic of Matthew’s “christologized” worship language throughout the narrative. The Presence before which Israel fell in the past (e.g., Exod 33:10; 34:5-8; 1 Kgs 8:11; cf. Ps 5:8; 132:7; 138:2) is now among them as the Son.¹⁶⁹

Besides the connection of this passage with 1:21-25 and 28:16-20, the link between 18:19-20 and our discussion above of Matt 23 is manifest. The Son is the immanent manifestation of Israel’s God. We turn now to similar themes in 28:19-20.

III.2 Matt 28:19-20- The Son and His Abiding Presence

Though this passage could elicit a lengthy discussion, we note here only the significant literary-christological pieces that resonate with 18:19-20, 1:21-25, and our larger argument. There is not only the commonly noted thematic link between Jesus’

¹⁶⁷ Further supporting this view is the way in which Matthew uses “into the name [of Jesus]” in this cultic context, which almost surely reflects Jewish usage of a similar phrase for YHWH’s name (cf. Lars Hartman, ‘Into the name of the Lord Jesus’: Baptism in the Early Church [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997], 42-3). Pace Nolland, *Matthew*, 1268. For a brief but penetrating discussion of this issue, see Gathercole, *The Pre-Existent Son*, 65-68.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 187-89.

¹⁶⁹ Sievers blunts the christological force of the passage by saying that “the Shekhinah is manifested in Jesus,” as though Jesus were analogous to the Temple in which the Shekhinah was believed to dwell (“Where two or three,” 55). But this is not what the text says: ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν. The community is the “Temple,” and Jesus the Shekhinah among them (cf. also 12:6-8).

declaration in 28:20 – ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι – and 18:20 – ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν. There are also several other points of connection that reinforce the link between Jesus’ identity as Son of God and Emmanuel:

<p>Matt 28 20: ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι</p> <p>19: εἰς τὸ ὄνομα</p> <p>19: τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος</p> <p>18: ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς</p> <p>17: καὶ ἰδόντες [Οἱ δὲ ἑνδεκα μαθηταὶ] αὐτὸν <u>προσεκύνησαν</u></p>	<p>Matt 18 20: ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν</p> <p>19: εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα</p> <p>19: <u>τοῦ πατρὸς μου</u></p> <p>Cf. 11.27: Πάντα μοι παρεδόθη ὑπὸ <u>τοῦ πατρὸς μου</u></p> <p>Cf. 14.33: οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ <u>προσεκύνησαν</u> αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς <u>θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ</u>.</p>
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The admittedly truncated¹⁷⁰ list above highlights the repetition in 28:16-20 of the same tripartite christological themes we saw in 18:19-20: “into the name,” Jesus’ divine-filial identity, and the Emmanuel motif. As in 18:19-20, Matt 28:19-20 reflects a cultic setting (baptism) and in that setting again invokes the language of Father and Son, though now also adding the Holy Spirit.¹⁷¹ Those who come into the community are re-identified by their participation in the *one* who throughout the narrative has been explicated as Father,

¹⁷⁰ Truncated because 28:16-20 brings together numerous themes from the narrative that we cannot discuss here. As Otto Michel rightly notes, it is “the key” (*der Schlüssel*) to the entire narrative (Otto Michel, “Der Abschluss des Matthäusevangeliums: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Osterbotschaft,” *EvT* 10 [1950/51]: 21).

¹⁷¹ There remains much to be explored vis-à-vis the Spirit in Matthew, though our focus has been on the christological element at work in the narrative. However, the addition of the Holy Spirit in 28:19 serves as yet another point of *inclusio* with Matthew’s prologue (1:18-25) as well as Jesus’ baptism and temptation (3:15-17; 4:1).

Son, and Holy Spirit.¹⁷² Further, I have included in the list above 11:27 and 14:33 – widely regarded as christological turning points in the narrative – to show further how 28:16-20 extends and encapsulates Jesus’ identity as Emmanuel, the Son of the Father.¹⁷³ In 11:27, mirrored in 28:18, Jesus speaks of the authority he shares with the Father as the unique Son. His declaration in 28:18 re-invokes that earlier declaration – as the Son he reigns over all things. Likewise, in 14:33, the only place other than 28:17 where Jesus is “worshiped” by the disciples, it is precisely as “Son of God,” the “Lord” (14:28, 30), the “I am he” (14:27) who is present with them in the storm.

III.3 Matt 1:21-25 – The Son, Emmanuel

The fact that 18:19-20 and 28:16-20 draw Matthew’s Emmanuel motif into close relation with Jesus’ divine-filial identity should already suggest that such a relation is to be expected in 1:21-25, since these three passages share an intimate literary-christological

¹⁷² I discuss the narrative explication of “God” as Father, Son, and Spirit below. I am aware that I am going against much modern interpretation by suggesting that 28:19 contains an incipient trinitarianism (cf. Luz, *Matthew*, 3:632; Frankemölle, *Matthäus*, 2:549; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:686; esp. Nolland, *Matthew*, 1269; but cf. Gnllka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:509). However, ancient and modern commentators alike have noticed the striking nature of the singular ὄνομα for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As Ruck-Schröder puts it, “Matthäus spricht hier freilich nicht zufällig von dem Namen (Singular: ὄνομα), nicht den Namen. Mit dem Singular dürfte die triadische Entfaltung unter das Vorzeichen der Einzigkeit Gottes gestellt sein” (*Der Name Gottes*, 262). The singular “name” in 28:19 serves as a fitting capstone to the many arguments we have made above that the narrative binds together the identity of Father and Son. It is not clear to me, however, why Schröder suggests God’s very name is reshaped around the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, yet then go on to say, “Sie [die triadische Struktur] kann erinnern an die funktionale Zuordnung Jesu zu Gott, die die Einzigkeit Gottes nicht antastet” (262-3). As Gathercole comments, “A ‘name’ more than anything is concerned precisely with identity,” and is the point “at which functional approaches to christology break down” (*The Pre-Existent Son*, 67).

¹⁷³ Cf. Hartman, ‘*Into the Name of the Lord Jesus*,’ 151; Pace Luz, *Matthew*, 3:634-5.

relationship. And, indeed, a number of scholars have noted this connection.¹⁷⁴ Such a reading, however, has also been quite vigorously contested.¹⁷⁵

These contestations ultimately fail on both a logical and exegetical level. For example, Verseput's reading seems to be driven by a deeper, albeit understandable, theological concern. After arguing that Jesus' divine sonship is not grounded in his conception, he says, "The very fact that the evangelist does *not* ground this [Father-Son] relationship in the miraculous conception, removes all hindrance to the presumption of an eternal consanguinity, and therefore a pre-existent Sonship."¹⁷⁶ Verseput's concern seems to be that discerning a connection between Jesus' conception and his divine sonship would sever any possible connection of Matthew's christology with an important aspect of orthodox christology, namely, the eternal relation of Father and Son. This is a legitimate and important question for any interpreter concerned with historical Christian orthodoxy, and it is one to which we shall return. Nonetheless, it is difficult to see how Verseput's conclusion about the lack of a Son of God christology in Matthew's birth narrative coheres with statements he makes elsewhere. At one point, he refers to Jesus as "a divinely conceived child,"¹⁷⁷ and elsewhere says, "Matthew's figure of Jesus enjoys

¹⁷⁴ Rudolph Pesch being followed by many scholars (cf. "Der Gottessohn").

¹⁷⁵ Cf., e.g., Verseput, "The Role and Meaning"; J. Nolland, "No Son-of-God Christology in Matt 1.18-25," *JSNT* 62 (1996): 3-12; Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 171-2; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:201, and 201 n. 9. Nolland ("No Son of God Christology," 3) cites Anton Vögtle (*Messias und Gottessohn, Herkunft und Sinn der matthäischen Geburts- und Kindheitsgeschichte* [Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1971], 17) as a proponent of this view, but this is not exactly correct. Vögtle actually agrees with Pesch that Jesus' divine sonship is in view in 1:18-25, but argues that the passage is primarily concerned to show that Jesus' "abnormal" inclusion in David's line was in fact an express promise to the house of David (*Messias und Gottessohn*, 17-18).

¹⁷⁶ Verseput, "The Role and Meaning," 540 (italics original). Verseput is also (rightly) concerned that seeing a Son of God christology in the birth narrative derives from a certain historical-critical construal of the development of early christology rather than from the text itself (532). We shall address this issue below as well.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 533.

already in his infancy the intimate relationship of a Son (2:15).”¹⁷⁸ Such descriptions in fact confirm what Verseput attempts to deny – the organic connection between Jesus’ identity as “Son of God” and the entire infancy narrative.¹⁷⁹ Three further points suggest that Jesus’ identity as Emmanuel in 1:21-25 is closely intertwined with his identity as Son of God.

First, if Jesus’ divine-filial identity is as central to the narrative as many scholars argue, it seems *prima facie* unlikely that his identity as such is absent from the birth narrative. Scholars have long made the connection with Jesus’ divine-filial identity and the birth narrative precisely because the connection suggests itself, particularly on repeated readings. The double genealogies (1:1-17 and 1:18-25) illuminate literarily, and receive illumination by, the narrative’s repeated emphasis on and continuity-in-contrast between Jesus as son of David and Son of God (e.g., 22:41-46). This leads to our second point.

Second, numerous passages encourage a retrospective reading that re-invokes the birth narrative.¹⁸⁰ For example, in 13:55, Matthew has adapted Mark’s text (6:3) to read: οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός; Matthew’s unique phrasing serves the literary

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 540. Nolland’s argument follows a similar pattern to that of Verseput, and Nolland, too, makes significant concessions. Though arguing throughout his essay that the birth narrative is not connected to Jesus’ divine-filial identity, he ends with a footnote saying, “Though certainty is not possible, it may well be that, once Matthew’s story is fully told, the absence of a human father for Jesus in 1:18-25 is to be seen, in retrospect, as symbolically appropriate to his unique relationship with the divine Father” (“No Son of God Christology,” 12 n. 40). But this is exactly how Matthew’s narrative works – as the narrative progresses, earlier passages are clarified and “reinterpreted.” At another point Nolland calls Jesus’ conception “a unique miracle of God,” and says that it occurs “with reference to God himself doing something extraordinary by means of the Spirit” (8). I find it difficult to understand how such descriptions in fact do *not* logically connect with Jesus’ identity as the Son of the Father. If God is acting in a “unique” way to bring about the earthly life of the one who throughout the narrative is referred to as “Son of God,” is there really “no Son of God Christology” in Matthew’s birth narrative?

¹⁷⁹ Verseput, “The Role and Meaning,” 537.

¹⁸⁰ Pace Verseput, “The Role and Meaning,” 532.

purpose of recalling the birth and infancy narrative, where it is repeatedly stressed that Joseph is *not* the biological father of Jesus. The irony of 13:55 obtains only if the reader understands these early passages in just this way – Joseph is not the “real” father of Jesus, God the Father is.¹⁸¹ To take another example, as mentioned above, our extensive study of 14:22-33 also points to the inextricable link between Jesus’ identity as Son of God and his identity as Emmanuel, since it is on the heels of his self-revelatory declaration – θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε (14:27) – that he “saves” Peter and the other disciples (14:30-31; 1:21!), and is subsequently worshiped as “Son of God” (14:33). Kupp (rightly) invokes 14:22-33 as further evidence of the “divine presence” theme in Matthew’s narrative; yet, elsewhere Kupp denies that Jesus’ identity as Son of God is relevant to his identity as Emmanuel.¹⁸² Even more to the point, as we saw above, in 28:19-20 (and 18:19-20), Jesus’ identity as the “Son” is drawn into close relation with his declaration that mirrors 1:23: ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι.

Beyond the connections with the broader narrative noted above, structural features of 1:21-25 further suggest both the intimate connection between Jesus’ identity as Son of God and Emmanuel as well as the Son-name-Emmanuel motifs in 18:19-20 and 28:19-20. In fact, one of the structuring features of 1:21-25 is the following thrice-repeated, two-fold formula:

- 1:21:
- a. τέξεται δὲ υἱόν
 - b. καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν
- 1:23:
- a. τέξεται υἱόν

¹⁸¹ See also our brief discussion of 13:55 in chapter 4.

¹⁸² *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 77-9, 171-3.

- b. καλέσουσιν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἐμμανουήλ,
ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός

1:25

- a. ἔτεκεν υἱόν
b. ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν

The pattern is particularly striking in light of what we have observed in 18:19-20 and 28:16-20 – the close connection between Jesus’ sonship, his name, and identity as Emmanuel.¹⁸³ In 1:21-25 the announcement of a “son,” whose “name” is “Jesus,” frames the central Scriptural claim: the virgin will have a “son,” whose “name” will be “Emmanuel,” μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός. The patterns we observed above suggest that the “son” of whom 1:21-25 speaks is in fact “Son of God.” He can be called “Emmanuel” precisely because he is the “Son” of the “Lord” who effectually announces his birth (1:22). As Pesch noted some time ago, the two fulfillment quotations that explicitly treat Jesus’ sonship (1:22-3; 2:15) have an additional element unique only to them: τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑπὸ κυρίου διὰ τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος. Pesch comments:

Offenbar beabsichtigt der Evangelist, dass der Leser und Hörer der Perikope ὑπὸ κυρίου und τέξεται υἱόν aufeinander beziehe. Dieser υἱός ist ja der υἱός des κύριος und soll als solcher erkannt werden Der Evangelist legt Wert darauf, dass im Zitat V. 23 der κύριος selbst spricht . . . als Sohn einer Jungfrau stammt Jesus aber ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, d.h. er ist Gottes Sohn, des κύριος Sohn. Der κύριος, der diese Geburt verheisst, spricht, da er von Empfangen und Gebären einer παρθένοϋ kündigt, im Verständnis des Evangelisten notwendig von seinem (= Gottes) Sohn. Die Wendung ὑπὸ κυρίου dient dieser Pointe.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸³ The combination of these terms (τίκτω, καλέω, ὄνομα, υἱός) is common in the OT (especially in Genesis). If Leroy Huizenga is right in connecting this language in Matthew with the Akedah, then his argument would further reinforce the theme of divine sonship, since in that schema the Father and Jesus are typologically related to Abraham and Isaac (cf. *The New Isaac*, 144-51; 153-6).

¹⁸⁴ “Der Gottessohn,” 410. See also his explanation of 2:15 on p. 411 of the same article. Cf. Frankemölle, *Jahwebund*, 12-15.

Pesch's reading is vindicated by a number of points we made earlier, not least the unique phraseology for Jesus' "generation" in 1:16 (cf. 2:11) and the repetitive use of the word "child" (τὸ παιδίον) for Joseph's relation to Jesus in the infancy narrative.¹⁸⁵ Further, the narrative's consistent connection between the Father's and Son's mutual identity as κύριος, especially in 22:41-46, confirms the close relation between the speaking κύριος in 1:22 and the υἱός to be born in 1:23. Emmanuel, μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός, is the earthly, filial presence of the paternal κύριος.

III.4 Θεός and the Father-Son Relation: Matthew's Filialized Theology

While there are numerous other ways we could explore Matthew's portrait of Jesus as Son of the Father, our observations above lead us finally back to where we began in our Introduction – toward more explicit theological reflection vis-à-vis Matthew's christology and the identity of Israel's God. While we have yet to use the explicit language of "incarnation," our argument above certainly moves in that direction: in Jesus, Israel's God dwells in human form. But it is precisely at the point with which we ended above – the explication of Jesus' identity in 1:23 – that scholars have argued that Jesus is not, in fact, to be identified with Israel's God. As a result, we will end our discussion of Jesus' divine-filial identity in Matthew by exploring one final way in which the narrative binds together Father and Son in a mutually-constitutive relationship – the linguistic patterns that uniquely characterizes Jesus' speech about the Father and himself.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. p. 72 above.

III.4.1 Incarnation?

To speak of “incarnation” in Matthew would be considered anachronistic by some New Testament scholars. Raymond Brown’s developmental schema for early christology represents well the general view of an “incarnation” in Matthew (and Luke).¹⁸⁶ For Brown, simply put, Matthew has no incarnational theology, precisely because according to Matthew’s birth narrative, Jesus is not pre-existent. There is no heavenly/divine “person” to be incarnated; therefore, God’s begetting of Jesus in his human life is the inception of his existence, and thus, his divine sonship as well.¹⁸⁷ For Brown, the virgin birth further develops the Church’s early christology and attempts to curtail an adoptionist interpretation of Jesus’ baptism, but it does not yet cross into the Johannine and Pauline boundaries of the “incarnation” of the divine Son.¹⁸⁸ Jesus, therefore, is not to be “identified” with God in Matthew, certainly not in any way approaching the “Nicaean sense.”¹⁸⁹ This reading of Matthew is epitomized in the way Brown, along with many others, translate Matthew’s claim that Jesus is Emmanuel, μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός (1:23). Rather than the more incarnationally-loaded “[Jesus is] God with us,” we should opt for “God is with us [in Jesus],” thus maintaining a clear distinction between “God” and “Jesus.”¹⁹⁰ Davies and Allison likewise opt for the latter translation for three reasons:

¹⁸⁶ See Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 140-1.

¹⁸⁷ It has long been argued that incarnation/pre-existence and virgin birth are incompatible (e.g., Rudolph Bultmann, *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 10-11). The early post-apostolic Church, however, had little trouble holding the two together (e.g., Ign., *Eph.* 18-19).

¹⁸⁸ *Birth*, 141-2.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 150, n. 52.

¹⁹⁰ It is not clear to me, however, what Brown means when he says that Jesus is not to be identified with God, but goes on to say that, “For Matthew Jesus is the expression of God’s presence with his people” (*Birth*, 150 n. 52). The actual theological content of the word “expression” remains opaque to me.

1. The NT rarely (if ever) calls Jesus ‘God.’
2. The evangelist could have believed Jesus to be the fullest embodiment or vehicle of the divine purpose and love and yet have perceived him as less than God.
3. If ὁ θεός were a predicate of Jesus, we might expect to read, Ἐμμανουήλ . . . ὁ θεός μεθ’ ἡμῶν. What we in fact have is the ordering of the Hebrew: Ἐμμανουήλ . . . μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός. The μεθ’ ἡμῶν is probably adverbial; hence we should translate, ‘with us is God’, not ‘God with us’.¹⁹¹

This interpretation also coheres with what Luz would describe as Matthew’s “functional christology,” that “God acts through Jesus.”¹⁹² The logic would seem to be that Jesus cannot be identified with Israel’s God, given that he comes into existence (albeit in a “divine” way) at a particular time and place with no “previous” existence.

Brown, et al. have made several important observations, not least the simple – though no less weighty – point that Matthew does not express himself explicitly in an idiom like John’s prologue that articulates God’s dwelling among his people in Jesus. Nor does Matthew have something like John’s repeated “I Am” statements or Paul’s

Ironically, his choice of a linguistic term (“express”) sounds like John’s prologue! Further, Brown’s historical reconstruction is questionable in its own right. It is by no means obvious that Matthew, Luke, John, and Paul are intentionally polemicizing against “adoptionism,” or that “adoptionism” was a real competing christological option during their time. This is especially so considering the dates at which Matthew, Luke, and John probably wrote. And Paul argues *from* pre-existence christology, not *for* it (e.g., Phil 2:5-11).

¹⁹¹ *Matthew*, 1:217. G. M. Styler summarizes the ambiguity of the phrase μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός: “When Matthew speaks of the coming of Christ as ‘God with us’, the words *need* not go beyond the sphere of authority and mission; in the O.T. they are not meant to indicate the incarnate presence of God . . . Nevertheless for Matthew they probably *do*” (“Stages in Christology in the Synoptic Gospels,” *NTS* 10 [1964]: 406, italics original).

¹⁹² Luz, *Matthew*, 2:459; 3:639. Luz does not discuss at length the interpretation of μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός, and simply translates it as “God-with-us” (1:96). On that same page, however, he says that Matthew does not “identify” Jesus with God.

“Christ hymn” (Phil 2:6-11) that readily suggest the pre-temporal life of the Son.¹⁹³ And, finally, though a number of studies have suggestively argued that Jesus in Matthew is indeed “pre-existent,”¹⁹⁴ it seems clear that Jesus’ pre-existence was not an overriding concern for Matthew.¹⁹⁵

The matter is, however, considerably more complex on a narrative-theological level than Brown and others have allowed. I have argued repeatedly that Matthew’s narrative entails, among other things, the claim that the life of Israel’s κύριος has taken a particular shape at a particular time – the shape of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. If that is the case, then something like “incarnation” necessarily takes its place in an ecclesially-attuned articulation of Matthew’s christological grammar. And, it is especially relevant for discussion considering the common scholarly judgment that Matthew lacks an incarnational theology and therefore does not “identify” Jesus with God.

It is important to note that the common way of framing the matter already betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of Matthew’s narrative-theological mode of discourse. The question is often asked in terms of an equation: does Jesus “equal God,” such that we can say, “Jesus *is* God”? When asked in this propositional way, Jesus clearly comes up wanting, since most (including me) would argue that the “person” often referred to as θεός in Matthew is clearly differentiated from the one referred to as Ἰησοῦς.

¹⁹³ Of course, John’s language does not necessarily secure Jesus’ “identification” with God in the estimation of some scholars. Cf., e.g., James F. McGrath, *The Only True God: Early Christian Monotheism in its Jewish Context* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009), chpt 4.

¹⁹⁴ Especially Gathercole, *The Pre-Existent Son*.

¹⁹⁵ While Gathercole may well be right that Matthew (and Mark and Luke) presuppose Christ’s pre-existence, it still seems rather clear, at least to me, that pre-existence does not play a substantial role in their narrative presentations of Jesus. Matthew’s concern is much more explicitly eschatological, not protological, though surely the two cannot be neatly separated (i.e., a christological protology in fact depends upon a christological eschatology).

So, it is concluded, Jesus is not “identified” with “God,” and therefore he is “less” than “God.”¹⁹⁶ But such an articulation of the identity of Israel’s θεός in Matthew already presupposes a particular grammar of the word θεός, failing on a rather massive level to take into account the complex way the narrative’s linguistic patterns render the identity of θεός and Ἰησοῦς.¹⁹⁷ Obviously, our argument to this point has attempted to correct this misstep, and we have sought to make plain the unified identity of Father and Son through the form and content of the narrative. At least two points further illuminate how Matthew’s theological grammar is shaped around the Father-Son relation.

III.4.2 θεός as Father-of-the-Son

We have been arguing that the articulation of the identity of Israel’s “God” is reshaped in Matthew by his relation to the Son. It remains only for us to see how Jesus’ characteristic speech about “God” contributes substantially to this filial reshaping of God’s identity.

Robert Mowery, from whom I take many of the following observations, has shown in several articles that Matthew’s language for the one referred to variously as

¹⁹⁶ Kupp, cited earlier, exemplifies well this construal of the matter: “The citation [in Matt 4:10] makes it obvious that Jesus’ equality with God is not at issue [even though he receives προσκύνησις]. Even beyond Jesus’ encounter with the Tempter, nowhere in Matthew are Jesus and God simply identified . . . For Matthew, YHWH is the only true God, and worship of Jesus his Son, the Emmanuel Messiah, is a christological window to his divine agency of his Father’s will” (*Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 227); cf. also, e.g., Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 234.

¹⁹⁷ In further Wittgensteinian terms, by trying to simplify Matthew’s language into an abstract/propositional formula, this way of getting at Matthew’s christology has created a different “game,” which at least shifts, if not changes, the meaning of the terms (cf. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, [Germ. and Eng. Oxford: Blackwell, 1969], §65).

θεός, κύριος, and πατήρ has a very specific literary-rhetorical shape.¹⁹⁸ Most importantly for our purposes: (1) Jesus *never* refers to “God” as “Father” when addressing the devil or Jewish leaders, i.e., his opponents; (2) conversely, in the vast majority of instances when he personally addresses God or speaks of God to his disciples (or disciples mixed with the crowds), he speaks of him as “Father”;¹⁹⁹ (3) the one who is “God” and “Lord” in Matt 1—4 is introduced only as “Father” in and after his announcement of his “Son” (3:17; cf. 1:22-23; 2:15);²⁰⁰ that is to say, the linear progression of the narrative elucidates a theological-grammatical rule: language of the “Father” vis-à-vis the disciples is grounded in the prior revelation of the Father-Son relation.²⁰¹ (4) Jesus is the *only* character in the narrative on whose lips is found this “Father” language. He alone can speak of the Father, because he alone is the Son. These broader patterns come to concise expression in Jesus’ apocalyptically pregnant declaration in 11:27: οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ, οὐδὲ τὸν πατέρα τις ἐπιγινώσκει εἰ μὴ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ ὃ ἐὰν βούληται ὁ υἱὸς ἀποκαλύψαι.

¹⁹⁸ See his various articles: “God, Lord, and Father: The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew,” *BR* XXXIII (1988): 24-36; “The Activity of God in the Gospel of Matthew,” (SBLSP 1989; Atlanta: Scholars Press), 400-411; “Matthean References to the Kingdom: Different Terms for Different Audiences,” *ETL* 70 (1994): 398-405; “From Lord to Father in Matthew 1-7,” *CBQ* 59 (1997): 642-656 (cf. also his “Subtle Differences: The Matthean ‘Son of God’ References,” *NovT* 32 [1990]: 193-200).

¹⁹⁹ Only in the cry of dereliction (27:64) does Jesus address his πατήρ as θεός, which follows the OT text. Further, of the eight times Jesus uses θεός while addressing disciples (compared to 44 total uses of πατήρ), it is almost always in makaristic/aphoristic material (5:8, 9; 6:24, 30; 19:24, 26) rather than in a direct, personal “application” to the disciples. Consider, for example, Matt 6:30, where Jesus uses the analogy of θεός clothing the grass of the field. His following summary statement in 6:32, applied directly to the disciples, says, οἶδεν γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος ὅτι χρήζετε τούτων ἀπάντων. In 16:23, he uses θεός because of the stark contrast between “God” and “Satan/humans”: ὑπάγε ὀπίσω μου, σατανᾶ· σκάνδαλον εἰ ἐμοῦ, ὅτι οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. A similar “divine”/human contrast is implied in 19:24 & 26.

²⁰⁰ Note also that of the 18 uses of κύριος for θεός/πατήρ (not including parabolic material), 16 occur in OT quotations, the OT phrase “angel of the Lord,” or “what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet” (Mowery, *idem*, 32). Otherwise, Jesus is κύριος/κύριε.

²⁰¹ We argued above that Jesus’ constant reference to “your Father” throughout the SM is finally grounded in his unique filial authority that concludes the SM (7:21). See pp. 123-28 above.

Mowery may be right that these patterns provide a window into Matthew's community,²⁰² but his observations are striking when read within the literary-christological patterns we have traced throughout this study.²⁰³ While the divine-filial identity of Jesus is revealed only to those who are disciples, the converse is equally true; the proper articulation of the identity of θεός – the Father of the Son, who is therefore also the Father of the Son's followers – is revealed only to those whom the Son desires to reveal him, namely, disciples (11:25-30; 16:16-17). This is of course why Jesus is the *only* character in the story to speak of "God" as "Father," and why Matthew makes a clear distinction between Jesus' repeated claim to "God" as "my Father" and his claim on behalf of his disciples that "God" is "your Father."²⁰⁴ The Son retains his sovereignty in speaking of/revealing the "Father" and claiming him for his "own" (e.g., 11:27) even while he shares that sonship with his disciples (e.g., 12:48-50).²⁰⁵

It has been observed for some time that the Matthean Jesus speaks of "God" as "Father" much more frequently than in Mark or Luke, which in turn is said (rightly) to

²⁰² "God, Lord, and Father," 29.

²⁰³ Cf. Ibid, 33.

²⁰⁴ In fact, though Mowery does not note this, of his forty-four "Father" references, Jesus never uses such language without qualifying that nomenclature with a reference to himself or his disciples. Sixteen times Jesus says "my Father," once "his father" (referring to himself as the Son of Man, 16:27), twice personally addresses "God" as "Father" (11:25, 26), and four times pairs an absolute reference to him (ὁ πατήρ) with an absolute reference to himself as "the Son." Nineteen times Jesus refers to "God" as "Father" of his disciples with a second person possessive pronoun, and once with the first person plural, though still only with reference to the disciples (6:9). Once he refers to "their father" (i.e., faithful disciples) when interpreting the parable of the weeds (13:43). The upshot is that, once again, "Father" language in Matthew is not general "Jewish" language, but has specific christological and ecclesiological content. For a few further comments on this issue, cf. Meier, *Vision of Matthew*, 56; Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 53.

²⁰⁵ The reservation of Father language for Jesus alone is particularly telling in light of Stanton's comment: "In ancient biography (including Matthew) there is a deeply-rooted convention that a person's actions and words sum up the character of an individual more adequately than the comments of an observer" (Graham Stanton, "Matthew: ΒΙΒΛΟΣ, ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ, or ΒΙΟΣ? in idem, *Studies in Matthew and Early Christianity* [eds. Markus Bockmuehl and David Lincicum; WUNT 309; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013], 102).

illuminate Matthew's christology – Jesus' bears a "unique" filial relation to the Father.²⁰⁶ Surprisingly, however, Jesus' thoroughly filialized speech for "God" rarely transforms our expression of Matthew's *theological* grammar.²⁰⁷ Indeed, the "patrocentricity" of Matthew is often taken simply as "Matthew's explicit concern to establish in his Gospel the identity of the true Israel in continuity with the language and symbols of Judaism."²⁰⁸ But such a judgment overlooks the concomitant "filiocentricity" of the Gospel and the christological shape to Matthew's *πατήρ* language mentioned above. As 11:25-27 tersely expresses, the literary-theological effect of Jesus' narrative-wide and exclusive speech about "the Father" is to render the identity of "God" inarticulable apart from *this particular* Father-Son relation. Put otherwise, while the term "God" is not rejected by Matthew's narrative, it remains one step removed from the Son's preferred idiom, precisely because it does not yet reveal the eschatological and filial impress the story of Jesus places upon the identity of Israel's "God."²⁰⁹ To name "God," for Matthew, is to name the Father-in-relation-to-the-Son.

Further instructive is to recall the inextricable connection between theology and praxis in ancient Jewish/Christian life.²¹⁰ The narrative's christologically-grounded

²⁰⁶ Cf., e.g., Mowery, "From Lord to Father," 655. This is by no means to say the Father-Son motif is unimportant for Mark and Luke.

²⁰⁷ For example, Kingsbury, one of the strongest proponents of "Son of God" as Matthew's central christological title, does not discuss how the identity of Israel's *θεός* is reshaped around the Son (cf. *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom*, 40-83).

²⁰⁸ Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 214. Kupp makes this statement when discussing Matthew's baptismal formula in 28:19, abstracting the word "Father" from its relation to the "Son" and "Holy Spirit" in the rest of the verse. Cf. also, e.g., Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 162.

²⁰⁹ I take the language of "impress" from C. Kavin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (BZNW 139; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 174.

²¹⁰ Often noted. For example, Tuckett says, "[W]hat was regarded as important was often not so much what one 'believed,' or the 'ideas' one had, but quite as much what one did What was important was as much orthopraxy as any orthodoxy" ("Matthew: The Social and Historical Context," 104-5; that way of putting it, however, creates a rather false dichotomy between "belief" and "practice").

speech of ὁ πατήρ/ὁ υἱός is not simply an “idea” pondered abstractly in the community, but fundamentally shapes its most basic liturgical and communal forms of life, e.g., prayer (6:9; 18:19-20; cf. 8:25; 14:30), discipline (18:19-20), forgiveness (18:35; cf. 27:40), teaching (23:8-10; 28:19), central confessions (23:8-10; 28:18-20), serving (23:11-12), baptism (28:19), and worship (e.g., 14:33; 28:17-20). The “fact” of the Son, that is, fundamentally (re)shapes one’s grammar for speaking about and living unto Israel’s θεός – all turns on his relation to the Son.

To return to our original question about Matt 1:23, one cannot possibly answer the christological question generated by the phrase μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός (1:23) without listening to the rest of Matthew’s narrative about who this God is. He is the God whose identity and authority is shared with his unique Son, and he is only rightly identified when spoken of as the Father of this Son.²¹¹

III.4.3 μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός as Son-of-the-Father

The question of what Matthew means by describing Jesus as μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός must not only take into account the narrative’s apocalyptic reshaping of the identity of Israel’s God with the advent of his Son, but also the full, cumulative effect of what the story says about the one of whom it is confessed, ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ (14:33).²¹² This of

²¹¹ Concomitant with the problematic propositional approach noted above (i.e., does Jesus = God?) is the widespread assumption that explicitly and unambiguously calling Jesus “God” would somehow solve the matter. This is patently false, not least because many figures in Jewish literature could be referred to as θεός/θεοί without a confusion of their identity with that of Israel’s unique God (for a list of numerous texts and a good summary of the way “G/god” language worked in ancient Jewish and G-R literature, cf. Rainbow, “Monotheism and Christology,” 53-58). The only way to determine what an author meant by referring to a figure as “G/god” would be to read such language in its literary and cultural context.

²¹² Thus the problem with a statement like Ziesler’s that, “A full-blown doctrine of the incarnation, let alone an identification of Jesus with Yahweh, cannot easily be found in this verse [1.23]” (“Matthew and

course entails the numerous arguments we have made, including, among other things, Matthew's προσκυνέω language, the "kyriotic" overlap of Father and Son, the christological appropriation of the OT, the mutually-constitutive relationship of the Father and the Son, and the Son as the Shekinah.

More specifically, it is precisely the narrative element that has not been taken seriously enough when asking how we should understand Jesus as μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός in 1:23. As we saw above, the narrative goes on to provide linguistic variants to 1:23 as it progresses. Indeed, as some scholars have suggested, Matthew follows the common literary pattern that "the end writes the beginning and shapes the middle," and, "narrative in fact proceeds 'in the reverse.'"²¹³ Not only, therefore, does the whole narrative "(re)write" our reading of 1:23, but also offers two explicitly christological interpretations of it, which we discussed above:

18:20: οὗ γάρ εἰσιν δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἕμὸν ὄνομα, ἐκεῖ εἰμι ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν.

28:20: καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.

In these two statements, "God" in the phrase μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός (1:23) is "re-written" with the "I" of 18:20 and 28:20 ([ἐγὼ] εἰμι).²¹⁴ The christological appropriation of the prominent OT and early Jewish image of God's abiding presence – at work in 18:20 and

the Presence of Jesus," *ER* 11 [1984]: 62 n. 29). But could one articulate *any* of Matthew's "doctrines" from a single verse?

²¹³ Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 22-3. Cf. Richard Burridge ("From Titles to Stories" in *The Person of Christ* [eds. Stephen R. Holmes and Murray A. Rae; London: T&T Clark, 2005], 54), who says, perhaps with a bit of hyperbole, that 28:16-20 "resolves all the themes of the Gospel"; Michel, "Der Abschluss," 21.

²¹⁴ The emphatic first person pronoun is only in 28:20.

especially 28:20 – articulates the Son as the eschatological presence of Israel’s God in Israel’s Scriptural idiom.²¹⁵

Conclusion

The goal of this chapter has been to trace as closely as possible the narrative-wide articulation of Jesus’ identity as the filial κύριος. Reading Matthew as a coherent, unified narrative, it has necessarily criss-crossed the entire story in order to illuminate Matthew’s theological grammar that turns on the Father-Son relation. What we saw come to pointed expression in 14:33 – Jesus as the saving, filial presence of Israel’s κύριος – we have also seen expressed throughout the narrative as a whole. The promise of Israel’s κύριος to dwell with his people has come true in his Son.

Brief Excursus 2: What of Wisdom?

Expressing Matthew’s Emmanuel motif in the way we have above – as inextricable from the narrative presentation of the Father-Son relation – facilitates a few further comments on the hotly debated issue of “Wisdom christology” in Matthew.²¹⁶ We have largely avoided the discussion of this issue in Matthew, because it is not indispensable to the argument we have made, and there does not appear to be an end in sight to the debate.

²¹⁵ We discussed above the Shekhinah language in 18:19-20. Jesus’ promise in 28:20 – ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι – reflects a similar theme, invoking the common OT and early Jewish language of YHWH’s promise to dwell with his people (e.g., Isa 43:2, 5; Jer 49:11 [LXX]; cf. 1:8, 17 [LXX], 19; Hag 1:13; 2:4; cf. also Gen 26:3; 24; 39:2, 21; Josh 1:9; 6:27; 1 Sam 18:28; 11Q19 (Temple) LX, 14 [אֲנֹכִי עִמָּכֶם]; 1QapGen XI, 15; *T. Jos.* 20:2; *T. Ab.* [A] 17:11).

²¹⁶ See n. 122 above.

It is not our goal to discuss in detail all of the issues regarding Matthew's so-called Wisdom christology.²¹⁷ On most accounts, Matthew has drawn on Israel's "cultural encyclopedia" in a way that links (in some way) Israel's Wisdom tradition with Jesus (esp. 11:2/19; 11:25-30; 23:34-37; cf. 10:37-40²¹⁸).²¹⁹ In view of our overall assessment of Matthew's narrative, the debate about whether Matthew "identifies" Jesus with Wisdom, or simply borrows Wisdom motifs, is somewhat beside the point. Rather, to borrow two phrases from the same scholar, Matthew has "modulated" Wisdom motifs into a "new key," and "metaphorically transformed" those motifs to thicken his literary portrait of the Son.²²⁰ That is to say, christologically significant Wisdom motifs are almost surely present in Matthew's Gospel, but as others have rightly pointed out, Matthew makes little effort to draw sustained attention to an "equation" between Jesus and Wisdom.

In light of this state of affairs, it seems best to suggest that Matthew has christologically appropriated Israel's language for Wisdom much as he has christologically appropriated early Jewish language for the Shekhinah (18:19-20; 23:37-24:1), or

²¹⁷ For a helpful summary of the issues, see Gathercole, *The Pre-Existent Son*, 193-213.

²¹⁸ See p. 271-2 above for a discussion of this text.

²¹⁹ A number of scholars who argue against *identifying* Jesus with Wisdom in Matthew nonetheless often see Wisdom motifs at work, while not considering them to play the influential role others have assigned to them. See, for example, Gathercole, *The Pre-Existent Son*, 209; Luz, *Matthew*, 2:172; idem, "The Fulfillment of the Law in Matthew," in *Studies in Matthew*, 212 n. 113.

²²⁰ On "modulation," see Richard B. Hays, "The Gospel of Matthew: Reconfigured Torah," *HTS* 61 (2005): 180, 182; On "metaphorical transformation," see idem, "How Does Matthew Use Scripture to Narrate the Identity of Jesus?" unpublished portion of unfinished manuscript, 27). This filialized "new key" is particularly evident in the passage usually considered most promising for a Wisdom christology in Matthew, namely, 11:28-30. Matthew's literary shaping of this tradition betrays the point we are making. He has placed it on the heels of 11:25-27 with the result that the one who offers eschatological rest is the Son of the Father (11:27).

YHWH's "name" (1:21; 7:22; 12:21; 18:20),²²¹ or Isaiah's language for the dawn of YHWH's glory (4:14-16). The narrative does not betray an explicit interest in a Wisdom christology as such any more than it is interested in a Shekinah-, name-, or glory-christology. The narrative's focus – its grammar – is the Son, the Emmanuel in whom the kingdom is becoming present. It thus appropriates sundry traditions that variously express the immanent presence of Israel's God among his people in a way that explicates the identity of the Son-who-is-Emmanuel. Matthew is not bound to any particular metaphor; rather, he has utilized resources within Israel's scriptural and cultural encyclopedia that would further resonate with the reader to illuminate how the filial κύριος is the eschatological presence of YHWH among his people. For Matthew, the Son does not conform to any one of these images. The image conforms to the Son.

²²¹ Rück-Schroder expresses it well by saying Matthew develops the name of Jesus as "die Auslegung des Names des Gottes Israels >>am Ende der Zeiten<<" (*Der Name Gottes und der Name Jesu*, 262-3).

CONCLUSION

I. Introduction

This study has sought to bring clarity amidst an overriding conceptual confusion in Matthean scholarship regarding Matthew's christology. On the one hand, it is commonly asserted that Matthew displays, at least at points, a "high" christology. Scholars commonly invoke Matthew's Emmanuel (1:23; 18:20; 28:20) or Shekhinah (18:20; 23:37-24.2) motifs as fitting examples of such an evaluation. On the other hand, one finds the same scholars affirming that Jesus is not to be "identified" with "God," and that Matthew's is a "functional" or "agency" christology.²²²

This study has sought to go to the heart of the matter by carefully examining Matthew's narrative-wide use of προσκυνέω, since this word epitomizes the narrative's expression of an exclusive commitment to Israel's God (e.g., 4:10) and at the same time occupies a central, systemic, and theologically provocative place in its portrait of Jesus. Further, following Matthew's christological-shaping of this προσκυνέω motif, I have sought to trace the organic connection between προσκυνέω and the narrative's sustained focus on Jesus' divine-filial identity,²²³ the latter of which likewise encompasses the entire story. Thus, this study constitutes a reading of Matthew's Gospel whose force turns on the cumulative literary effects of προσκυνέω and Jesus' divine-filial identity as they come to expression across all twenty-eight chapters. The core of this reading argues for a theological grammar in Matthew's Gospel, the rules of which govern its basic articulation of the identity of Israel's κύριος ὁ θεός. In sum, we argued that Matthew has reshaped the

²²² For the relevant literature, see the Introduction and Chapter 5, pp. 303-5.

²²³ See, e.g., the chart on p. 222.

identity of – and therefore Israel’s fundamental confession of and commitment to – “the Lord God” around the Father and the Son.

Our conclusion here will attempt to bring together a number of the most salient points of the foregoing study. More particularly, it will attempt to express *in nuce* the Christo-theological logic of Matthew’s προσκυνέω and Son-of-God motifs that we have traced throughout the Gospel.

II. προσκυνέω in Matthew’s Gospel

When considering Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω, at least two important literary categories prove illuminative. First is that of *Leitwort*, a concept probably intrinsic to any extended word study inasmuch as word studies focus on those linguistic patterns particularly constitutive of a literary work’s dominant themes.²²⁴

It has long been noted that προσκυνέω is a “favorite” Matthean word, the truth of which is readily evidenced by comparing Matthew’s frequent use of προσκυνέω to its sparse use in Mark and Luke. While many have noted the importance of this redactional move, rarely has anyone taken into account the full literary-shape of Matthew’s προσκυνέω motif. As a result, we have sought to discover the decisive role προσκυνέω plays in the overall shape of Matthew’s narrative christology. Not only does it occur frequently, but Matthew also uses it in theologically, christologically, and literarily strategic ways in order to shape the readers’ sensitivity to its importance.

²²⁴ On *Leitwort*, see Robert Alter (*The Art of Biblical Narrative* [New York: Basic Books, 1981], 92-96 and the chapter, “The Techniques of Repetition”); See also C. Kevin Rowe, *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (BZNW 139; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 197-99.

On a theo-christological level, its thirteen uses are reserved for two characters only – God the Father or Jesus (18:26 notwithstanding, see ch. 2). On a literary level, for example, Matthew uses it multiple times in the all-important literary frame (2:2, 8, 11; 28:9, 17), at the climactic moment in the center of the story (14:33), and at strategic moments in Jesus’ ministry (e.g., the climax of his temptation [4:9, 10] and his first healing recorded in detail [8:2; cf. 4:23]). Not yet considering the results of our lengthy study, these brief observations alone suggest the formative role προσκυνέω plays in Matthew’s theological grammar. It is more than just a word he “prefers”; it shapes the readers’ most basic perception of and response to the Father and the Son.

The second literary motif illuminative of Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω may be somewhat less well-known than Buber’s *Leitwort*, namely, Riffaterre’s notion of “ungrammaticality.” Ungrammaticality, simply put, is the presence of an incongruity or contradiction that arises in a text’s “grammar” that requires the reader to move beyond the text’s “linearity.”²²⁵ The “ungrammaticality” itself “reveals that it is hiding something,”²²⁶ which is resolved only as the reader progresses through the text. The process of moving through the text modifies one’s understanding of the ungrammaticality and thus entails a “retroactive” reading that grasps the ungrammaticality’s significance. The relevance of “ungrammaticality” to Matthew’s narrative is readily illustrated in the προσκύνησις offered to Jesus by the magi and the προσκύνησις Jesus declares is due to “the Lord God” at the climactic moment of his temptation:

2:11: καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ . . .

²²⁵ Michael Riffaterre, *Semiotics of Poetry* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1978), 12.

²²⁶ Idem, *Text Production* (trans. Terese Lyons; New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 12.

4:9-10: ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσης μοι. τότε λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὕπαγε, σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ· κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.

In the opening, formative chapters of Matthew's narrative, the reader is confronted with an apparent incongruity. Of the magi's action before the infant Jesus it says, *πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ*; at the climax of Jesus' temptation, the devil requests precisely the same response: *ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσης μοι*. Jesus affirms that such action is appropriate only for one, *κύριος ὁ θεός* (see the discussion in chpt. 2).

The sharpness of the incongruity is intensified by, among other things, (1) Matthew's careful shaping of these passages, such that literary carelessness is hardly the answer; indeed, Matthew frequently uses repetition to re-invoke earlier passages;²²⁷ (2) the climactic and repetitious role *προσκυνέω* plays in each of these two passages; i.e., *προσκυνέω* is not incidental to their *intentio*; (3) the magi's falling and worshipping – the first public response to the infant Jesus – is mirrored in the first public response to the risen Jesus; the women “grasp his feet” and “worship” (*προσκυνέω*) him (28:9; cf. 28:17); (4) Matthew's repeated use of *προσκυνέω* throughout the narrative in christologically provocative ways (esp., e.g., 14:33).

If literary carelessness is ruled out, three interpretive options remain. One: because *προσκυνέω* has a relatively wide semantic range, and because the dictum in Matt 4:10 is stated unambiguously, Matthew expects his readers to differentiate between the *προσκύνησις* offered to Jesus and that which is offered to the Lord God. The

²²⁷ On Matthew's literary artistry, especially his use of repetition and “intratextuality,” see the Introduction and the beginning of chapter 4.

προσκύνησις offered to Jesus might better be characterized as “obeisance” or “reverence” offered to a royal figure, while “worship” is reserved for “God.” As we have seen, numerous interpreters take this option. Two: affirm but ignore the contradiction; Jesus is indeed “worshiped,” but neither is he to be identified with “the Lord God” nor is he “equal” to God. We saw a number of interpreters follow this route as well. Three: conclude that somehow Jesus is included in, indeed constitutive of, the identity of Israel’s God; the προσκύνησις he receives is that which Israel owes to the one Lord of all. As Riffaterre argued, it is only as one progresses through the text and allows the text to “control its own decoding”²²⁸ that one attains a “hermeneutic” reading, a reading that grasps the significance and meaning of the ungrammaticality. This we have attempted to do, and we synthesize that reading in what follows.

III. προσκύνεω and the Identity of God

Apparent from our argument, we conclude that the third interpretive option alone takes into account the full shape of Matthew’s narrative-christological program. Considering the careful way in which Matthew has shaped his narrative, Matthew’s thirteen uses of προσκυνέω demand thoughtful consideration for his rendering of the identity of “God” and Jesus. But Matthew’s careful and pointed use of προσκυνέω is not frequently mirrored in its scholarly interpretation, the details of which often evince exegetically and theologically contradictory assertions. Such conclusions²²⁹ reveal a fundamental confusion about how to articulate the identity of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel.

²²⁸ Riffaterre, *Text Production*, 6.

²²⁹ See the Introduction.

But the identity of Jesus is precisely what the Gospel is about at its most fundamental level.

To begin making our way through the impasse we surveyed Matthew's cultural "encyclopedia" vis-à-vis προσκυνέω language. The purpose of this survey was to sensitize us to the semantic potential of προσκυνέω language for a Jewish-Christian audience, lest we facily import purportedly "fixed" meanings into Matthew's narrative. While our study of Matthew privileges the "symbolic world" constructed by the narrative itself, attending to Matthew's cultural encyclopedia enables us to see more clearly how the narrative "actualizes" or "narcotizes" certain pieces of encyclopedic information. We found that while προσκυνέω language does indeed have a relatively wide semantic range, in the OT texts to which Matthew appears most indebted the cultic connotations of προσκυνέω predominate; the proper "worship" of God or its idolatrous inverse is most often in view.

Nonetheless, within Isaiah and the Psalms, for example, προσκυνέω infrequently, but at important points, can express what appears to be an act of submission or reverence to a figure other than Israel's God. This is especially the case in eschatological settings, where προσκύνῃς is offered to vindicated Israel/Isaiah's "servant" (e.g., Isa 49:23) or to the world-ruling Davidic king (e.g., Ps 71:11, LXX). The theme of enemies bowing before Israel in the eschaton is carried forward in non-biblical Jewish literature as well (e.g., 1QSb V, 28; *1 En.* 62:9). We also observed that already in the OT, and often in Second Temple texts, care is taken not to use προσκυνέω (or similar expressions) for figures other than God in a manner that might confuse such language with the worship

dues to God alone. The “refusal tradition” is one such way Jewish and Jewish-Christian texts preserve the uniqueness of the worship/praise due to Israel’s God, though it is not the only way (see also the discussion in chapter four of Jewish agency language).

In chapter two we turned to Matthew’s narrative and began tracing his use of προσκυνέω, starting with the visit of the magi (2:1-12). We saw that the thrice-repeated phrase προσκυνέω + ἔρχομαι is an integral part of the literary and theological structure of the passage, signaling the magi’s purpose (2:2), Herod’s duplicity (2:8), and the climax of the account (2:11). Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω in the magi’s visit not only evokes numerous OT intertexts (e.g., Ps 71 LXX; Isa 60; Zech 14), but is also accompanied by a number of other “cultic” motifs (e.g., λίβανος, προσέρχομαι, προσφέρω) and numerous intratextual evocations of the birth narrative where Jesus is announced as “Emmanuel.” The combination of these elements in these earliest occurrences of προσκύνησις offered to the “king of the Jews” (2:2) already begins to imbue them with intonations of “worship,” although we argued that only the rest of the narrative could make such a judgment clear; the meaning of προσκυνέω in Matthew obtains only at the level of grasping the whole of the narrative. Nonetheless, Matthew’s christological privileging of προσκυνέω language at this early point has something of a primacy effect that resonates through the rest of the story; to see Jesus rightly is to render him προσκύνησις.

The intonations of “worship” in 2:1-12 loudly resonate in Matthew’s next use of προσκυνέω – the climactic moment of Jesus’ temptation (4:8-10) – as we noted above in our comments about the “ungrammaticality” elicited by these two passages. We showed that properly understanding the temptation episode as a whole, and more specifically

Jesus' declaration in 4:10, turns on grasping the all-important narrative "time" laid out in the preceding baptism episode. Although John recognizes Jesus as the powerful "coming one," the "now" of 3:15 indicates an epochal shift in time that will continue until Jesus' crucifixion; the Son will humbly fulfill the righteousness Israel failed to fulfill; his ministry will take shape in a way that seems to contradict his identity as the Emmanuel (1:23), king of the Jews (2:2), Isaiah's κύριος (3:3), and the powerful "coming one" (3:11).

As a result, Matthew has instilled a thick irony in the devil's request (4:8-9) and in Jesus' response (4:10) by shaping the account to echo the visit of the magi on numerous levels. The προσκύνησις attendant to universal lordship – requested by the devil but belonging only to "the Lord God" – the Son of that "Lord" (1:22-23) has already received proleptically *in nuce* from the nations, along with their "glory" (2:11; 4:8). By further tracing Matthew's connection of universal Lordship with προσκύνησις at key points in the narrative (28:9, 16-20; cf. 11:25-7), we began to see more clearly the way the narrative christologically explicates Jesus' declaration in 4:10. The προσκύνησις due to Israel's "Lord God" takes concrete shape in – or to use Matthew's idiom, is "fulfilled" in – the worship of the Son who rules with the Father over all things.

Matthew's frequent use of προσκυνέω in the body of the narrative, the subject of chapter three, extended and supported our observations from chapter two; the "grammar" of προσκυνέω inchoately formed by reading 2:1-12 and 4:9-10 together takes further shape as the narrative progresses. The consistent recurrence of προσκυνέω with Jesus as its object builds a cumulative christological resonance through the whole story. We

noted, however, that there is a good dose of dramatic irony at play in all of these episodes. On the story level, the characters' προσκύνησις before Jesus in supplication are ambiguous acts, without necessarily carrying the connotation of "worship." However, on the discourse level – the level at which Matthew communicates with his audience and forms their theological grammar and liturgical life – Matthew repeatedly shapes these accounts such that the προσκύνησις offered to Jesus resonates with that which he says belongs to "the Lord God."

Matthew places the healing of the leper (8:1-4) on the heels of the SM, the effect of which prioritizes it literarily as the first healing narrated in detail. Matthew reshapes Mark's account (1:40-45) so that the leper bows before Jesus in προσκύνησις and addresses him as κύριε. In so doing Matthew re-invokes both his recent pairing of προσκύνησις and κύριος (4:10) as well as the christologically dense ending of the SM (7:21-29). The theological significance of προσκυνέω and the κύριε-address is further thickened by Matthew's evocation of several OT themes closely related to Israel's speech about its "Lord" – Jesus' "will" as the efficient cause of the healing (cf. 2 Kgs 5:7, 15) and the power of his outstretched "hand" (see the large list of texts on p. 132, n.43). The "hand" of Israel's κύριος is the hand of the filial κύριος.

As the narrative progresses, similar patterns emerge again and again. In the raising of the leader's daughter (9:18-26) Matthew has moved it from its place in Mark (5:21-43) and reshaped it to a similar effect as that of the healing of the leper. Matthew again leads off a series of healings with προσκύνησις directed toward Jesus, prioritizing it literarily and thus shaping the readers' perception of the complete submission requisite to

supplicating Jesus. Matthew deftly elides the account of Jesus-the-eschatological-bridegroom – thick with the OT’s imagery of YHWH’s relation to Israel (9:14-17; cf. Isa 62:5) – with the leader’s approach to him in προσκύνησις and full confidence of his power over life and death by the touch of his “hand” (9:18). The echoes of the leper are palpable; the προσκύνησις due to Israel’s Lord God is again re-invoked and amplified.

Likewise, in Jesus’ encounter with the “Cannanite” woman, Matthew has uniquely placed it as the third in a series of episodes highlighting true and false “worship” (14:33; 15:7-9; 15:25), pointedly contrasting the Cannanite’s προσκύνησις of the “Lord” Jesus (15:25) with the leaders’ “vain worship” of Israel’s “God” (μάτην δὲ σέβονται με, 15:9). More, Matthew’s significant expansion of Mark’s account structures the passage around the woman’s thrice-repeated address of Jesus as “Lord” in the language of the Psalmists’ cries to YHWH. Her προσκύνησις is the point at which the story’s trajectory decidedly shifts: her worship of and cries to the “Lord” issue in his relenting and in the restoration of her daughter.

Despite the fact that these instances of προσκύνησις are often interpreted in a more mundane manner (“reverence,” “homage,” etc.), our exegesis revealed that they have been taken up into the service of Matthew’s larger portrait of the Son. While at the story-level the characters’ actions remain ambiguous, the way Matthew has told the story (the discourse level) betrays a significant dose of dramatic irony. The προσκύνησις Jesus receives – whether the characters realize it or not – is that which Israel (and eventually the nations) gives to κύριος ὁ θεός, the Lord of life and death, the one on whom it calls in its deepest need.

IV. προσκυνέω and the Son of God

In some ways chapters four and five constitute the heart of this work. They attempt to articulate definitively the theological “force” behind the προσκύνησις offered to Jesus as well as the narrative logic that allows, indeed demands, a double object for the unique προσκύνησις offered to Israel’s κύριος ὁ θεός. These chapters attempt, that is, to make perspicuous Matthew’s theological grammar that comes to expression in the story of the Son.

Chapter four is devoted to an extended reading of Matt 14:22-33, the climax of which depicts Jesus worshiped and confessed as “Son of God” (θεοῦ υἱός) by the rescued disciples. We argued in detail that to hear anything other than “worship” in Matthew’s use of προσκυνέω at the climax of this episode would be to contravene the careful literary and inter/intratextual arrangement evidenced at each progressive step of the account.

In light of some interpretations that would depict Jesus vaguely or anemically as God’s “agent” in this passage, we discussed common ways ancient Jewish texts express God’s use of human and angelic “agents.” While these texts can show God’s agents exalted in many ways, they betray a common pattern of articulating YHWH’s ultimate agency such that Israel’s worship/praise remains squarely on him. This is particularly so in the many retellings of Israel’s deliverance from Egypt, which underlines the entire logic of 14:22-33. Matt 14:22-33, on the other hand, takes no steps to mitigate the worship offered to Jesus. Indeed, in the vein of Israel’s confessions of YHWH’s unique lordship in delivering his people and controlling creation, the disciples’ worship and

confession of Jesus is the only “grammatical” response to the one who is the filial κύριος over wind and wave.

But it is precisely the worship of the *Son* that is key for Matthew’s theological grammar, and it is with this filial language that Matthew skillfully navigates the double commitment to Israel’s basic confession of the one God and the full worship of Jesus. There is neither a *Vermischung* of the paternal and filial κύριοι or a relativizing of the worship the Son receives, nor a rivalry between Father and Son. Rather, Jesus is fully worshiped as the *Son*, who necessarily derives his identity from the Father, even while the Father’s identity cannot be articulated, in Matthew’s Gospel, apart from his Son. To return to Riffaterre’s language, Matt 14:22-33 begins to “decode” the “ungrammaticality” witnessed at the beginning of the narrative. The προσκύνησις Jesus receives is none other than that which is due to κύριος ὁ θεός, but neither does it contradict Israel’s basic confession. Rather, it reshapes the προσκύνησις due to κύριος ὁ θεός around the relational grammar of Father and Son. It is, therefore, to that paternal and filial grammar our final chapter turns.

Chapter five extends the argument of chapters two through four by tracing Matthew’s divine-filial language for Jesus and its relevance to the identity of God in Matthew. Using 14:33 as a hermeneutical key, we argued that the narrative in fact reflects the logic of 14:33 on a massive scale; it reconstitutes the identity of Israel’s God around the Father-Son relation. We began the discussion by examining closely Matt 22:41-46 – the pericope about David’s “Lord” – because that climactic passage weaves together several of the most important narrative strands regarding Jesus’ identity (e.g., Christ; son

of David; Son of God; Lord; the christological appropriation of the OT, etc.). We saw that 22:41-46 not only draws into close relation Jesus' identity as Son of God and David's κύριος, but also that it brings those identifiers into close relation with the Father's identity as κύριος.

We then looked to the narrative on a broad scale to shape more precisely our articulation of Jesus' identity as "Son of God" and "Lord" in 22:41-46. We argued that Matthew repeatedly brings together the language of Father/God-Son-Lord in a way that puts a distinctly filial impress on Israel's identification of its κύριος. Examining the movement of the baptism narrative revealed the mutual identity of Father and Son as κύριος. Isaiah, through whom Israel's Lord announced the coming of his Son (Matt 1:22), now announces the coming of the κύριος in the ministry of John the Baptist (Matt 3:3). Indeed, at first glance, the "Lord" appears to be Israel's "God" (3:8-10). As the passage progresses, however, the term "Lord" expands. Forming an inclusio with Isaiah's announcement (3:3), in the Father's mouth Isaiah's "Lord" becomes "my beloved Son" (ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, 3:17). Father and Son are κύριος.

Turning next to Matt 11:1-12:8, we found a pattern strikingly similar to that which we observed in the baptism narrative and 22:41-46. The Christ (11:2), who fulfills Isaiah's and Malachi's visions of the coming of the Lord (11:5, 9-14), is none other than the hidden Son of the Father (11:25-7). The eschatological rest offered by the Son who shares "all" with the paternal Lord (11:25-30) is further explicated by Matthew's literary arrangement – he is "Lord of the Sabbath," the one "greater than the Temple" (12:6-8). Matt 12:1-8 narrativizes, as it were, the logic of 11:25-30: the κύριος, identified by Jesus

as his Father in 11:25, receives such a distinct filial impress that the Son, who shares “all things” with his Father, likewise shares his identity as κύριος. Put slightly differently, the filial κύριος is the immanent eschatological presence of the paternal κύριος (12:6), the one in whom the prophets’ promises of eschatological rest have come true. Having already discussed 14:22-33 in detail in chapter four, we simply noted that the same pattern obtains therein – the “I am he,” the “Lord” over the chaotic waters (14:27-30) is “Son of God” and worshiped as such (14:33).

After taking into account Matthew’s broader narrative integration of the identity of Father and Son as κύριος we turned back to the more immediate context of 22:41-46, demonstrating that the passages before and after 22:41-46 deepen the connection between Father and Son as κύριος. Matthew has formulated the pericope about the greatest commandment, which turns on love for “the Lord God” and neighbor (22:34-40), so that it is inextricably bound up with Jesus’ counter question about the identity of the Christ, David’s κύριος, Son of the paternal κύριος. The hermeneutical effect of reading κύριος ὁ θεός of 22:37 with the messianic and filial κύριος of 22:43-5 is again to place a filial impress on the identity of Israel’s κύριος, evidenced by numerous details in the passage itself and analogous moves in the narrative, which we explored.

We further found that Matt 23 develops the Christ-Son-Lord themes of 22:34-46. Matthew’s narrative-wide coordination of Father and Son as κύριος, epitomized in 22:41-46, makes its way into Israel’s basic confession of the “one” God. That confession now takes on a distinctly twofold shape (23:8-10) – the one Christ and the one Father together constitute the “one” toward whom the community is fundamentally oriented. The

ecclesially-centered confession of the “one” Christ and Father of 23:8-10 is reinforced by its literary inverse at the end of Matt 23 – the departure of the “Presence” from the Temple/Jerusalem. Building on the christologized “Presence” theme articulated in 1:23 and 18:19-20, Matt 23:37-24:2 narrates the departure of the Son as the departure of Israel’s God from “this generation.”

Following those themes from 23:37-24:2, we further saw how Matthew has woven them together with Jesus’ divine-filial identity. Matt 1:23, 18:19-20, and 28:16-20 all closely bind together the motif of God’s presence with Jesus’ identity as “Son.” Though Jesus’ identity as Emmanuel and Son are mutually interpretive, however, there is a prominent scholarly stream that argues against any “identification” of Jesus with “God;” Jesus is not “God with us” in the incarnational sense, but rather the eschatological agent “in whom” God is present. To finalize our discussion, we argued that this scholarly judgment betrays a fundamental misconception about Matthew’s narration of the identity of God. We thus explored how comprehensively Matthew’s *theological* grammar is grounded in the Father-Son relation by tracing the speech patterns particular to Jesus in the first Gospel.

The unremitting paternal language throughout the Gospel cannot simply be equated with Matthew’s Jewish background, as is commonly asserted. Rather, Matthew’s “Father” language constantly re-invokes the thoroughly “filialized” contours of his narrative, evidenced not least in the fact that the Son is the *only* character in the Gospel to speak of “God” as “Father” (and this only in his personal addresses to his Father or to disciples/disciples and crowds; never to his opponents). Put otherwise, the narrative

impels the reader toward a re-articulation of God's identity around his Son. For Matthew, "God" is now by definition unknown and inaccessible apart from his mutually-constitutive relationship with the Son, making Matthew's most basic identification of him inextricable from the Father-Son idiom; not to know the Son is not to know the Father (e.g., 10:32-40; 11:27). Thus, when Matthew reinterprets the word "God" in the phrase μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θεός with the christological "I" of 18:20 and 28:20, the reader is well-equipped grammatically to understand the unity-in-distinction between "God" and "Jesus"; the Son is the filial repetition of the Father, his immanent presence among his people.

Concluding Postscript: Theological interpretation and Trinitarian Hermeneutics

Besides the methodological comments made in the Introduction about narrative and grammar, there is a more basic, though inextricably connected, way in which I approach Matthew's Gospel that should be briefly elucidated here. Simply put, this is an ecclesially located theological reading of Scripture that hopes to contribute to the rising stream of biblical scholarship seeking to reclaim the hermeneutical benefits of the Church's trinitarian and christological Creeds for reading the biblical texts.¹ The textual argument we have pursued was largely concerned with reading Matthew's Gospel closely. Nonetheless, it worked within the assumption that the hermeneutical potential of the Christian theological tradition actually exposes something of the complexity and logic of Matthew's narrative christology rather than occluding it by the imposition of later Greek philosophical categories.

Though by no means claiming that Matthew was thinking in fourth century theological terms, this study has presupposed that the theological grammar that Nicaea and Constantinople were later to formulate enables us to read the text with a precision otherwise unavailable to us. This hermeneutical posture arises from three interrelated

¹ Cf., e.g., David Yeago, "The New Testament and the Nicene Dogma: A Contribution to the Recovery of Theological Exegesis," *ProEccl* 3 (1994): 152-64; Richard Hays, "Reading the Bible with the Eyes of Faith: Theological Exegesis from the Perspective of Biblical Studies," *JTI* 1.1 (2007) 5-21; C. Kevin Rowe, "Biblical Pressure and Trinitarian Hermeneutics," *ProEccl* 11 (2002): 295-312. On the nature and task of theological interpretation and uncommonly lucid comments about bibliology, see the many superb articles by John Webster (*The Domain of the Word: Scripture and Theological Reason* [London: T&T Clark, 2012], especially the following essays: "The Domain of the Word," "Resurrection and Scripture," and "Biblical Reasoning"; see also his "Prolegomena to Christology: Four Theses" in *The Person of Christ* [eds. Stephen R. Holmes and Murray A. Rae; London: T&T Clark, 2005]).

considerations:² first, the particular linguistic moves we observe in the New Testament about the internal relatedness of Jesus to the God of Israel could not be made apart from “larger theological judgments” about the identity of God.³ The contours of the text itself, that is, “pressure” us toward theological formulation that navigates Israel’s commitment to the one God while including the human Jesus within that identity.⁴ Second, the Church’s articulation of the doctrine of the Trinity *is* the navigation and explication of those larger judgments in the biblical texts, the expression of “the internal logic behind the particular form of Scripture’s grammar.”⁵ To read the NT within a Trinitarian framework is to employ the conceptual schemes necessary for understanding the particular locutions. Third, the previous two judgments are antecedently shaped by the confession that “the Trinity is the true reception of Scripture’s particular way of speaking about the identity of the Christian God,” the consequences of which entail “an otherwise unavailable form of exegetical perception.”⁶ While all three of these judgments form the conceptual background of my argument, it is the first that is most directly relevant. We have been interested in the linguistic moves unique to Matthew’s articulation of God’s identity in the story of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It may be feared that such a “theologically charged” reading necessarily runs rough-shod over the historical and literary features of Matthew’s narrative; that what

² See C. Kevin Rowe, “The Trinity in the Letters of St Paul and Hebrews,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity* (eds. Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), esp. 41-4. For a sophisticated articulation of the interplay between exegesis and dogmatics, cf. idem, “For Future Generations: Worshiping Jesus and the Integration of the Theological Disciplines,” *ProEccl* 17 (2008): 186-209.

³ Rowe, “The Trinity,” 44.

⁴ Cf. Rowe, “For Future Generations,” 189-97.

⁵ Rowe, “The Trinity,” 44.

⁶ Ibid.

Matthew actually says must recede into the background and that we have used (or rather, abused) the text to say what we wish it to say. Besides the simple fact that *all* reading is deeply theological, nothing could be further from the way we understand the nature and purpose of so-called “theological interpretation,” since it is precisely *this* text by which the risen Lord communicates himself and rules his church.⁷ It is only by patient, detailed, and repeated lingering over the surface area of the narrative, by entering into the cultural encyclopedia that shaped the lives of Matthew and the early Christian community, that we will discern with greater precision the subject matter to which this particular Gospel testifies. A distorted reading of the text yields a correlative distortion in analogous thinking/living today; it is the Church’s task to listen attentively.

Finally, then, theological interpretation is not a choice, but a hermeneutical necessity, inextricable as it is with the self-involved questions of identity, social location, and the ethics of interpretation. Located within the bounds of the community of the Christian faith, I cannot read these texts as other than what they are (as received by the Church). To put it another way, my “framework” for reading is a “given,” because to disengage from an ecclesial reading of these texts “would be [to] engage in the enterprise of trying to make [myself] disappear.”⁸ “I can only answer ‘What am I to do?’ if I can answer the prior question ‘Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?’”⁹

In the end, the benefits (or lack thereof) of such hermeneutical presuppositions can be born out only in the reading of the text. Vindication (or condemnation) in such an

⁷ Cf. Webster, “The Domain of the Word,” 14-5.

⁸ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (3d. ed.; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007 [orig. 1981]), 216.

⁹ Ibid; cf. Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, §105.

endeavor arises from how well the argument traces and responds to Matthew's story of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; how well it elucidates Matthew's theological grammar.

APPENDIX

Matthew's Use of προσκυνέω in Synoptic Perspective Along with Other Relevant Passages

Episode 1: Visit of the Magi – Unique to Matthew (cf. chpt. 2)

2:2: λέγοντες· ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ τεχθεὶς βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; εἶδομεν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀστέρα ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἤλθομεν προσκυνῆσαι αὐτῷ.

2:8: καὶ πέμψας αὐτοὺς εἰς Βηθλέεμ εἶπεν· πορευθέντες ἐξετάσατε ἀκριβῶς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου· ἐπὰν δὲ εὑρητε, ἀπαγγείλατέ μοι, ὅπως κἀγὼ ἐλθὼν προσκυνήσω αὐτῷ.

2:11: καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνοίξαντες τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῶν προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα, χρυσὸν καὶ λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν.

Episode2: Temptation – Matthew & Luke Only (cf. chpt. 2)

Matt 4:8-10	Luke 4:5-8
<p>Πάλιν παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν καὶ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν ⁹ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, <u>ἐὰν πεσὼν προσκυνήσῃς μοι</u>. ¹⁰ τότε λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· ὕπαγε, σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ· <u>κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις</u> καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.</p>	<p>Καὶ ἀναγαγὼν αὐτὸν ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου ⁶ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος· σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἅπασαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ὃ ἐὰν θέλω δίδωμι αὐτήν· ⁷ <u>σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ</u>, ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα. ⁸ καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· γέγραπται· <u>κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις</u> καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.</p>

Compare Matt 2:11: καὶ ἐλθόντες εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν εἶδον τὸ παιδίον μετὰ Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ, καὶ πεσόντες προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀνοίξαντες τοὺς θησαυροὺς αὐτῶν προσήνεγκαν αὐτῷ δῶρα, χρυσὸν καὶ λίβανον καὶ σμύρναν.

Episode 3: Healing of the Leper – Matthew, Mark, & Luke (cf. chpt. 3)

<p>Matt 8:2-3</p> <p>καὶ ἰδοὺ λεπρὸς <u>προσελθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ</u> λέγων· κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι. ³ καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἥψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων· θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθέως ἐκαθαρίσθη αὐτοῦ ἡ λέπρα.</p>	<p>Mark 1:40-1</p> <p>Καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς <u>παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν [καὶ γονυπετῶν]</u> καὶ λέγων αὐτῷ ὅτι ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι. καὶ σπλαγχνισθεὶς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἥψατο καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· θέλω, καθαρίσθητι·</p>	<p>Luke 5:12-13</p> <p>Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πόλεων καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ πλήρης λέπρας· ἰδὼν δὲ τὸν Ἰησοῦν, <u>πεσὼν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ἐδεήθη αὐτοῦ</u> λέγων· κύριε, ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαι με καθαρίσαι. καὶ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἥψατο αὐτοῦ λέγων· θέλω, καθαρίσθητι· καὶ εὐθέως ἡ λέπρα ἀπῆλθεν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ.</p>
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Episode 4: Healing of the Ruler’s Daughter – Matthew, Mark, & Luke (cf. chpt. 3)

<p>Matt 9:18</p> <p>Ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος αὐτοῖς, ἰδοὺ ἄρχων εἷς <u>ἐλθὼν προσεκύνει αὐτῷ</u> λέγων ὅτι ἡ θυγάτηρ μου ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν· ἀλλὰ ἐλθὼν ἐπίθες τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπ’ αὐτήν, καὶ ζήσεται.</p>	<p>Mark 5:22-3</p> <p>Καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς τῶν ἀρχισυναγῶγων, ὀνόματι Ἰαῖρος, καὶ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν <u>πίπτει πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ</u> ²³ καὶ παρακαλεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ λέγων ὅτι τὸ θυγάτριόν μου ἐσχάτως ἔχει, ἵνα ἐλθὼν ἐπιθῇς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῇ ἵνα σωθῇ καὶ ζήσῃ.</p>	<p>Luke 8:41</p> <p>καὶ ἰδοὺ <u>ἦλθεν</u> ἀνὴρ ὃ ὄνομα Ἰαῖρος καὶ οὗτος ἄρχων τῆς συναγωγῆς ὑπῆρχεν, καὶ <u>πεσὼν παρὰ τοὺς πόδας [τοῦ] Ἰησοῦ</u> <u>παρεκάλει αὐτὸν</u> εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ</p>
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Episode 5: Sea-Walking – vv. 28-33 unique to Matthew

Matt 14:27-33: εὐθὺς δὲ ἐλάλησεν [ὁ Ἰησοῦς] αὐτοῖς λέγων· θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ εἰμι· μὴ φοβεῖσθε. ²⁸ ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν· κύριε, εἰ σὺ εἶ, κέλευσόν με ἐλθεῖν πρὸς σε ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα. ²⁹ ὁ δὲ εἶπεν· ἐλθέ. καὶ καταβάς ἀπὸ τοῦ πλοίου [ὁ] Πέτρος περιεπάτησεν ἐπὶ τὰ ὕδατα καὶ ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. ³⁰ βλέπων δὲ τὸν ἄνεμον [ισχυρὸν] ἐφοβήθη, καὶ ἀρξάμενος καταποντίζεσθαι ἔκραξεν λέγων· κύριε, σῶσόν με. ³¹ εὐθέως δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἐπελάβετο αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ· ὀλιγόπιστε, εἰς

τί ἐδίστασας;³² καὶ ἀναβάντων αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον ἐκόπασεν ὁ ἄνεμος.³³ οἱ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλοίῳ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες· ἀληθῶς θεοῦ υἱὸς εἶ.

Episode 6: Healing of the Canaanite Woman's Daughter – Matthew & Mark Only (cf. chpt. 3)

Matt 15:25:	Mark 7:25-6
ἡ δὲ ἐλθοῦσα <u>προσεκύνει αὐτῷ</u> λέγουσα· κύριε, βοήθει μοι.	<u>ἐλθοῦσα προσέπεσεν πρὸς τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ</u> .

Note also Matthew's significant expansion of the account, not printed here.

Episode 7: Parable of the Wicked Servant – Unique to Matthew (cf. chpt. 2)

18:26-7: πεσὼν οὖν ὁ δοῦλος προσεκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων· μακροθύμησον ἐπ' ἐμοί, καὶ πάντα ἀποδώσω σοι. σπλαγχνισθεὶς δὲ ὁ κύριος τοῦ δούλου ἐκείνου ἀπέλυσεν αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ δάνειον ἀφῆκεν αὐτῷ.

18:29: πεσὼν οὖν ὁ σύνδουλος αὐτοῦ παρεκάλει αὐτὸν λέγων· μακροθύμησον ἐπ' ἐμοί, καὶ ἀποδώσω σοι.

Episode 8: Request of the mother of the sons of Zebedee – Matthew & Mark Only (cf. Luke 12:50)

Matt 20:20	Mark 10:35
Τότε <u>προσηλθεν</u> αὐτῷ ἡ μήτηρ τῶν υἱῶν Ζεβεδαίου μετὰ τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῆς <u>προσκυνοῦσα</u> καὶ αἰτοῦσά τι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.	Καὶ <u>προσπορεύονται</u> αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης οἱ υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες αὐτῷ· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἵνα ὁ ἐὰν αἰτήσωμέν σε ποιήσης ἡμῖν.

Episode 9: The Resurrection

The women see the resurrected Jesus – Unique to Matthew (cf. chpt. 2)

28:9-10: καὶ ἰδοὺ Ἰησοῦς ὑπῆντησεν αὐταῖς λέγων· χαίρετε. αἱ δὲ προσελθοῦσαι ἐκράτησαν αὐτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ προσεκύνησαν αὐτῷ.¹⁰ τότε λέγει αὐταῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· μὴ φοβεῖσθε· ὑπάγετε ἀπαγγείλατε τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου ἵνα ἀπέλθωσιν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν, κακεῖ με ὄψονται.

The eleven see the resurrected Jesus – Unique to Matthew (cf. chpt. 2)

28:16-20: Οἱ δὲ ἑνδεκα μαθηταὶ ἐπορεύθησαν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν εἰς τὸ ὄρος οὗ ἐτάξατο αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, ¹⁷ καὶ ἰδόντες αὐτὸν προσεκύνησαν, οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν. ¹⁸ καὶ προσελθὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς λέγων· ἐδόθη μοι πᾶσα ἐξουσία ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ [τῆς] γῆς. ¹⁹ πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, ²⁰ διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν· καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος.

Other related texts

Transfiguration (See the brief discussion in chpt. 4)

17:5-6: ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος ἰδοὺ νεφέλη φωτεινὴ ἐπεσκίασεν αὐτούς, καὶ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῆς νεφέλης λέγουσα· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα· ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ. ⁶ καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ μαθηταὶ ἔπεσαν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτῶν καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν σφόδρα.

In Mark 9:6 and Luke 9:34 the disciples are “afraid” but do not “fall down.”

Man with “epileptic” son – Matt, Mark, & Luke

Matt 17:14-15	Mark 9:16-17	Luke 9:38
Καὶ ἐλθόντων πρὸς τὸν ὄχλον <u>προσῆλθεν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπος γονυπετῶν αὐτὸν</u> ¹⁵ καὶ λέγων· κύριε, ἐλέησόν μου τὸν υἱόν, ὅτι σεληνιάζεται καὶ κακῶς πάσχει·	καὶ ἐπηρώτησεν αὐτούς· τί συζητεῖτε πρὸς αὐτούς; ¹⁷ καὶ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ εἷς ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου· διδάσκαλε, ἤνεγκα τὸν υἱόν μου πρὸς σέ, ἔχοντα πνεῦμα ἄλαλον·	καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου ἐβόησεν λέγων· διδάσκαλε, δέομαί σου ἐπιβλέψαι ἐπὶ τὸν υἱόν μου, ὅτι μονογενὴς μοί ἐστιν . . .

Entry into Jerusalem (cf. Excursus 1.1 in chpt. 4)

Matt 21:9; 15-16	Mark 11:9-10	Luke 19:39	John 12:13
ὡσαννὰ <u>τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ</u> · εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου·	ὡσαννὰ· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου· εὐλογημένη ἡ	εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου·	ὡσαννὰ· εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου, [καὶ] ὁ

<p>ὥσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.</p> <p>vv.15-16</p> <p>ιδόντες δὲ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν καὶ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς κρίζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ λέγοντας· <u>ὥσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ</u>, ἠγανάκτησαν¹⁶ καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· ἀκούεις τί οὗτοι λέγουσιν; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς· ναί. οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ὅτι ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίσω <u>αἶνον</u>;</p>	<p>ἐρχομένη βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Δαυίδ·</p> <p>ὥσαννὰ ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις.</p>	<p>ἐν οὐρανῷ εἰρήνη καὶ δόξα</p> <p>ἐν ὑψίστοις.</p> <p>No parallel to Matt 21:14-16 in Mark, Luke, or John</p>	<p>βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.</p>
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Blaspheming the Son (cf. Excursus 1.2 in chpt. 4)

<p>Matt 26:65; 27:39-43</p> <p>τότε ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς διέρρηξεν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ λέγων· <u>ἐβλασφήμησεν</u>· τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων; ἴδε νῦν ἠκούσατε τὴν <u>βλασφημίαν</u>·</p> <p>27:39-43</p> <p>Οἱ δὲ παραπορευόμενοι <u>ἐβλασφήμουν</u> αὐτὸν κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν⁴⁰ καὶ λέγοντες· ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις οἰκοδομῶν, σῶσον σεαυτόν, <u>εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ</u>, [καὶ] <u>κατάβηθι ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ</u>.⁴¹ ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς <u>ἐμπαίζοντες</u> μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ</p>	<p>Mark 14:63-4; 15:29-30</p> <p>ὁ δὲ ἀρχιερεὺς διαρρήξας τοὺς χιτῶνας αὐτοῦ λέγει· τί ἔτι χρεῖαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων;⁶⁴ ἠκούσατε τῆς <u>βλασφημίας</u>· τί ὑμῖν φαίνεται; οἱ δὲ πάντες κατέκριναν αὐτὸν ἔνοχον εἶναι θανάτου.</p> <p>15:29-30</p> <p>Καὶ οἱ παραπορευόμενοι <u>ἐβλασφήμουν</u> αὐτὸν κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ λέγοντες· οὐὰ ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ οἰκοδομῶν ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις,³⁰ σῶσον σεαυτὸν καταβάς ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ.³¹ ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς <u>ἐμπαίζοντες</u> πρὸς ἀλλήλους μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων ἔλεγον·</p>
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<p>πρεσβυτέρων ἔλεγον· ⁴² ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι· βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ ἐστίν, καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ καὶ πιστεύσομεν ἐπ’ αὐτόν. ⁴³ πέποιθεν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ῥυσάσθω νῦν εἰ θέλει αὐτόν· <u>εἶπεν γὰρ ὅτι θεοῦ εἰμι υἱός.</u></p>	<p>ἄλλους ἔσωσεν, ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται σῶσαι· ³² ὁ χριστὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ καταβάτω νῦν ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμεν.</p>
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